

RELIGIO LIBERTINI:
Or, The Faith of a Converted
ATHEIST.
Occasionally set forth by
Mr. Richard Burridge,
Who was lately Convicted of
BLASPHEMY,
Before the Right Honourable
Sir Thomas Parker,
Lord Chief Justice of *England.*

To which is prefixed
A NARRATION of his LIFE, from his Birth
to the Time of his Sufferings; An Account of
what pass'd on his TRYAL at the Sessions-House
in the *Old-Baily*; A Relation of the Cause of the
Prosecution commenced against him; With an
ABJURATION and RECANTATION, which
he publickly made in the Chappel of *Newgate*,
on Sunday the Sixth of July, 1712. impartially
written with the Author's own Hand, whilst
under Confinement.

L O N D O N:
Printed for S A M. B R I S C O E, and Sold by
John Graves, next *White's Chocolate-House* in St. James's
Street, and J. Morphem, near *Stationer's Hall*, 1712.

RELIGIO LIBERTINI:

Of the First of a Converted

ATHEIST.

Occasionally for your per

Mr. Richard Brinsford

Who was lately Convinced of

BLASPHEMY.

From the Right Honourable

Mr. Thomas Parker,

Lord Chanceller of England.



printed

A N A T O M Y of the LIFE, from his birth
to the end of his Solitudes; An Account of
what he did in this Trayl at the Session before
the Queen; A Relation of the Conviction of the
Liberation of Conscience from him; A full
Account of his R-conviction, with
the Supplication made in the Chapel of the
St. George's Hospital, in the year 1715. Impartially
written with the Author's own Hand, and
under his Correction.

AND O V :

printed for G. W. BRISBEE, at the
gate of the Royal Exchange, in Cheapside, 1715.

To the Most Reverend the

ARCHBISHOPS,

As well as Right Reverend the

BISHOPS,

AND

Others the most Learned and
Orthodox CLERGY of Great-
Britain.

Most Holy Prelates, and Pious Divines sub-
ordinate to them,

As our blessed Lord and Saviour was endu'd
with such Humility whilst on Earth, which in-
cited him not to deny Publicans and Sinners the
Happiness of his most Holy Conversation, and had
also such a great Affection for True Penitents, that he

Epistle Dedicatory.

vouchsafed Mary Magdalen the Honour of first seeing him after his Resurrection, and on Peter so firmly Establish'd his Church, that all the furious Assaulls of Infernal Powers should never prevail against it. I hope these first Fruits of a Converted LIBERTINE, or greatest of ATHEISTS, which the last or present Age could produce, may find a favourable Acceptation at your Hands, since I am sincerely resolved to be no more unkind and discourteous to my GOD God's Church, or God's Ministers; for being sensible the Devil hath too long endeavour'd to decoy me out of the Way of Bliss, and watch'd his Opportunity to murder my Soul, I shall now be abhorr'd (after my Conversion, thro' the great Pains and Industry of that painful Pastor Master Lorrain) to be so unnatural to my self, and unkind to your Lordships and other Divines, as to slight the true Doctrine which ye deliver from the Pulpit, and proclaim by your learned Writings, in order to save me, and others, from Eternal Destruction. I thank God I am now capable of good Counsel and Advice; wherefore as he stands with his Arms of Mercy spread wide open, to receive, imbrace and kiss his returning Prodigals, it would be Ingratitude unpardonable, to refuse and slight the Invitation of so bountiful and indulgent a Father.

These Sheets, which contain a full Relation of my manifold Enormities, and a Summary of the Faith which I now profess, being hastily written under my Confinement in Newgate, where I am at present, I

Epistle Dedicatory.

do not doubt in the least but your Lordships, and the rest of the Learned Clergy will excuse each Lapsus Calami which may occur therein, thro' my undertaking this Piece at such Times which I could obtain from the Interruption of much Company. And my Ambition compels me to believe I shall obtain your good Opinion of this small Present, since it evidently shews I am to have the motherly Blessing of that Church which I had too long deserted, the joyful Welcome and Plaudite of Angels, the bountiful Reward and Euge of God my Father, a glorious Robe after this Life, an immarcessible Crown, and a perpetual Kingdom, for indeed this Honour have all his Saints. If I had not repented in due Time, Satan had put the same Cheat upon me, whereby he so sadly beguiled his wise Brother in the Gospel; whom, in that very Night, when he lullaby'd his Soul into a groundless Security, by presenting to her Eye the Abundance of his Riches, he suddenly snatch'd away into a Place of endless Torment: But now I will take care of being led away by this Seducer, by attentively hearing your Lordships, and others of the Clergy, who are the most honourable of God's Servants, and his special Ambassadors, cry aloud with all the Power of your Rhetorick, and Movingness of Passion, and calling on Sinners, and beseeching them to come home, and live happily in their Father's House. Before I conclude, I must beg Pardon of your Lordships and the rest of the Clergy, for not displaying your Merits, because a due Reverence to that known Modesty which crowns your many other noted Virtues, makes me forbear a Recital of them: But be pleas'd to give me leave to wish you all Health, Happiness and Prosperity in this World, with eternal Felicity in that to come; and then I shall attempt

Epistle Dedicatory.

attempt to subscribe my self your Lordships most humble and obedient Servant, as also paying a profound Respect to the Dignity of such of the Learned Clergy as are subordinate to you,

Richard Burridge.

6 NO 63

BOOKS

BOOKS Printed for S A M.
BRISCOE.

This Day is Publish'd,

M R. Paul Lorrain's Sermon preach'd in Newgate, July the 6th 1712, against Atheism and Blasphemy, and on the Abjuration, Recantation and Conversion of the Author of this Book, now a Prisoner in Newgate, from those erroneous Principles. Price 6d.

There is now Publish'd,

The Works of that wise Critick, *Dionysius Longinus*, or a Treatise concerning the Sovereign Perfection of Writing; faithfully translated from the Greek by Mr. Welsted; with some Remarks on *Milton*, *Spencer*, *Shakespear*, *Dryden*, the present Duke of *Buckingham*, *Waller*, and other English Poets.

Just Publish'd,

Epicurus's Morals, translated from the Greek by John Digby, Esq; with Comments and Reflections taken out of several Authors. Also *Isocrates*'s Advice to *Demonicus*. Done out of Greek by the same Hand. To which is added, An Essay on *Epicurus*'s Morals. Written by Monsieur St. Euremont, and made English by Mr. Johnson.

Just Publish'd,

The 2d Edition of the 4th and last Volume of the Works of Mr. Thomas Brown, which compleats the whole. Containing a Collection of his *Miscellanies*, *Poems*, *Letters*, *Dialogues*, *Lyconics*, *Maxims of State and Conversations*, *Fables*, *Tracts on several Subjectts*, either MSS. or privately printed and handed about to the Quality in former Reigns. Together with his Translation of *Horace*, *Martial's Epigrams*, and a *Criticism on the Stage*. To which is added, An Essay on *Humour in Comedy*; written by William Congreve, Esq; in a Letter to Mr. Dennis.

The Virgin unmask'd: Or, Female Dialogues betwixt an elderly Maiden-Lady and her Neice, on several Diverting

BOOKS Printed for SAM. BRISCOE.

verting Discourses on Love, Marriage, Memoirs and Morals, &c. of the Times. Written by Dr. Mandeville.

The Works of T. Petronius Arbiter, in Prose and Verse; In Three Parts. With a Critical Preface in Defence of the Author, and his Life and Character, written by Monsieur St. Evremont; and a Key to the Satyrs, by a Person of Quality. The Second Edition, adorn'd with Cuts. Made English by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Burnaby, Mr. Blount, Mr. Tho. Brown, Capt. Ayloffe, and several others. To which is added the Charms of Liberty, a Poem, by the late Duke of Devonshire.

Just Publish'd,

The compleat Works of Mr. Tho. Brown, in Prose and Verse; Serious, Moral, Comical and Satirical. Containing a compleat Collection of all his Dialogues, Essays, Satyrs, Declamations, Orations, Table-Talk, Letters, both Original and Translations from Greek and Latin: Letters from the Dead to the Living, and from the Living to the Dead. In Three Parts, Comical View of London; Translation of the Odes of Horace, Virgil and Ovid; Amusements, Serious and Comical, calculated from the Meridian of London; Laconics, or new Maxims of State and Conversation, &c. And a Supplement never before printed. To which is prefix'd a Character of T. Brown and his Writings, by Dr. James Drake. The Third Addition, with large Additions; in 4 Vols. 8vo.

6 NO 63

Just Publish'd,

The Third Edition of the perfect Picture of a Favourite: Or, Secret Memoirs of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, Prime Minister and Favourite of Queen Elizabeth, General of Her Majesties Forces and Stadtholder of Holland; containing an Instructive Account of his Rise, and his excessive Power and Wealth, his cruel Oppressions, the exorbitant Grants made to him, his Ambitious Aim at the Crown, his Lusts, Hypocrisy and Irreligion; also his Secret Combination with the Papists and Fanaticks, to undermine the Church of England, and exclude the Royal Family; written during his Life, and now Publish'd from an old Manuscript; with a Preface, by James Drake, M.D. Fellow of the Royal Society, and College of Physicians.

THE

THE

L I F E

OF

Mr. Richard Burridge.

RICHARD BURRIDGE, Son of Edward, by Margaret his Wife, was born on the North-side of the Strand, in the Parish of St. Martin in the Fields, in the Liberty of the ancient City of Westminster, on Monday the Sixteenth of May, in the Year of our Lord God, 1670. about the Second Hour past Noon. But the Impiety of Fortune having afflicted me for these Eleven or Twelve Years last past, I have Cause enough to exclaim against my Birth-Day in these Words of that most patient Man, who dwelt in the Metropolis of Chaldean-Superstition; *Let the Day perish wherein I was born, and the Night in which it was said, There is a Man-child conceived. Let that Day be Darkness, let not God regard it from above, neither let the Light shine upon it. Let Darkness and the shadow of Death stain it, let a Cloud dwell upon it, let the blackness of the Day terrify it.*

My Descent by my Father's Side, is derived from the ancient Family of the Burridges in Leicestershire, which came in with the Saxons, when they first made a Conquest on this Island. And tho' my Pedigree on my Mother's side cannot boast of so much Antiquity, as of Honesty and Loyalty, yet is it my Pride to be descended from the *Paynes* of *Gamlingay* in *Cambridgeshire*, whose Virtues have been conspicuous in that County for some Ages.

No sooner was I enter'd on the Stage of this sublunary World, but my Nativity was calculated by Mr. *Gadbury* and *Coley*, two eminent Astrologers, whose Calculation so punctually touch'd several Accidents and Misfortunes thro'

the Course of my Life hitherto, as to Matters of Drowning, Sickness, and Imprisonments, that I was almost perswaded that this Art of *Astrology* was infallible. For in the Year 1691. taking Water at *Westminster-Bridge*, in Company of a Gentlewoman, whom I then kept as a Mistress, and leaping hastily after her, as she stood on the Head of the Boat, I threw her into the *Thames* at a Spring-Tide; but taking hold on the Lappit of my Coat she pluck'd me in also: I could not swim; however, by a providential Struggling, I kept above Water, till some Watermen leap'd in, and took us both out alive. In the Year 1697. riding in a dark Night over a Bridge which had neither Wall nor Rail, I fell a great depth into the River *Lug* in *Herefordshire*, where it runs with a very swift and impetuous Current; but giving my Horse a loose Rein and free Bridle, as also clinging close to his Mane and Sides, I got safe on Shoar again. And lastly, in the Year 1708--9. going one Night into the *Bonadventure-Pinnace* at *Leith* in *Scotland*, and missing my Step in the Dark, I fell over the Key at High-water, where I had certainly been drowned, if some of the Crew had not took hold of one of my Arms before I sunk: Yet these signal Providences of God's Mercy in rescuing me so often from the Brink of sudden Death, would never make me reflect on my sinful Follies, but rather hardened my Will in an obstinate Unthankfulness of his bountiful Kindness towards me; and incited me vainly to suppose he was obliged to distribute greater Favours to such that were bred Gentlemen, than to those common, rustick, vulgar, and plebeian Spirits, who being fitted by the Hardnes of their Nature to dig and plow the Ground, the Greatness of their necessary Drudgery takes off much of the Burthen from the more refin'd sort of Mankind.

In my Infancy being of a weak and sickly Constitution, such was the Indulgence of my Parents, who spar'd no Cost for *Physicians* to restore me to Health, that they kept me most an end at an Uncle's House at *Islington*; but although I went not to School till I was above Seven Years of Age, Yet they spar'd no Pains of early infusing into me the Pious Notions of Virtue and Religion, and carefully grounded me in the true Principles of the *Church of England*, for whose Faith and Doctrine both my Father and Mother were so zealous, that I am sure they durst maintain the

Pro-

Profession thereof, by undergoing the Sufferings of a fiery Tryal.

About the Eighth Year of my Age beginning to gather both Strength and Health, I was sent to School, where having learn'd to read and write, and cast Accompts, my Inclination led me to the Study of the *Mathematicks*, to which I so assiduously bent my Genious, which (though I say it my self) was reckon'd by Men of extraordinary Parts to be none of the meanest; that by that Time I was Eleven Years old, I had acquir'd a competent Knowledge in Vulgar and Logarithmetical *Arithmetick*, *Geometry*, and *Trigonometry*; and for the better understanding *Chronology* and *History*, I was at the same Time not unskilful in *Astronomy* and *Geography*. Then being put to School to one Mr. *William Banks*, a most learned Man, who had receiv'd Academical Learning at *Christ-College* in *Cambridge*, as it pleas'd God to endue me with a strong Memory and quick Apprehension, I had gone thro' the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, besides other classical Authors, by that Time I had reach'd the Sixteenth Year of my Age; and my Pedagogue being profoundly skill'd in the *Chaldean*, *Syriack*, and *Arabick* Tongues; and was acquainted with the most curious Things in the *Rabbinical Learning*.

My Parents having a great Desire to bring me up a *Divine*, my Father carried me to the University at *Oxford*, where he did design to put me a Gentleman-Commoner in *Magdalen-College*; but there being then a great Disturbance in that Foundation upon account of the Fellows contradicting the *Mandamus* of King *James the Second*, who would have Mr. *Farmer*, a *Roman Catholick*, President of this House, instead of Doctor *Hough*, whom the Gentlemen had unanimously elected, according to the Rights and Privileges of their Charter, my Father brought me up to *London* again, Then, contrary to my Parents Will, going to the Seminary erected by King *James* in the *Savoy*, but more out of a Curiosity of seeing how Scholastick Discipline was perform'd by those of the Society of *Jesus*, than out of any Inclination to learn their Principles of Religion, at which Time I utterly abhor'd, the Education before acquir'd, made me superior to any of the Scholars in all their Four Schools. I was first under the Tuition of Mr. *Thomas Parker*, a *Jesuit*; and shortly after the chief Master, Mr. *William Polton*, the *Jesuit*, took me into his

School, who, when King James came to visit the Seminary, was pleas'd to do me the Honour of selecting me one of the Four Persons who, in the several Schools, was to make a Speech to his Majesty, which is as follows:

Regem tantum (Rex Serenissime) assuetum triumphis trium regnum, administratione occupatum ad puerorum ludum invisendum descendere benignitas est nulla unquam atas satis mirabitum; nos certeque latine vixdum didicimus balbutire illam, vel verbis agnoscere non valemus: ut quod jam estari nequeat ad infans lingua, adulta post hac manus, si quæ ferat occasio, fusus etiam sanguis melius eloquatur.

There was no Praise wanting from all the Jesuits in the Savoy to my natural and acquir'd Parts, which made them ambitious of converting me to their Faith; but as the Seduction was not to be wrought by Argument, for in several Disputations I confuted their erroneous Tenets, as well by the Opinion of the Greek and Latin Fathers, as Authority of general Councils, they corrupted me with great Gifts and fair Promises, insomuch that having more regard to future Glory and Honour in this World, than to my Salvation in the other, I imbrac'd the *Romish* Communion, and was in Prospect of having as great a Rise by a liberal Education as any one could expect, had not the sudden Revolution blasted all my Hopes, and forc'd my chiefeſt Friends to ſave themſelyes by a voluntary Exile into Foreign Countries.

Now being allur'd with the Pleaſures of the Town, the Tavern, the Play-Houſe, Balls, and Maſquerades, I made my chiefeſt Recreation; and taking Delight with an Acquaintance, whose licentious Course of Life was their Glory, to make them ſtill more wicked, it was also my Glory to divert them with poeſtical Pieſes of my own Compoſing, which being the Product of a debauched Muſe in a very high degree, my Companions were pleaſed to call me *Young Rochester*: But tho' my Lewdneſſ was not inferior to that unhappy Wit, yet now it is my Wiſh that I may never more imitate him, but in his unparalleld Repentance, whereby I may have a Spirit above the Reach of Sin, and a Soul not to be out-brav'd by the Terrors of the Grave; for by the Power of Divine Grace I will, the Reſtainer of my Days, dare to own God in Despight of Atheiſm, and Blaſphemey, and ſtand up for his Churc̄h in Oppoſition to Immorality and Prophaney. Again, Sere-

nading

nading and the Conversation of the Women of the Town was another Part of my Recreation, through the great Indulgence of my Parents, who allow'd me too much Money, which I so vainly misapply'd with the greatest Conduct as could be, to screen my Vices from their Knowledge. Thus it was, *Adam's* growing wanton in *Eden*, where the Earth freely brought forth all Things of it self, and where his Task of labouring was but his Recreation, not his Toil, which sent him first abroad to sweat in the World, and to wage a constant War with Briars and Thistles.

Being expert in Accompts, I was Clerk of the Third Troop of Life-Guard, then commanded by his Grace the present Duke of *Marlborough*; but the Troop going over to *Ireland*, my Parents Care for my Welfare prevailing with me to quit my Place, for fear the Bloody-Flux, the common Distemper of that Country, which at that Time raged there in the Camp, might shorten my Thread of Life, I still remain'd at home with my entirely beloved Father, who after a lingring Sickness for Four Months departed this Life in my Arms, on *Friday the 27th of March 1691*; and his Indulgence towards me being very extraordinary, I compos'd the following Elegy the next Day, to commemorate him as long as I live.

What solemn Sorrow must I now devise,
To join those Tears which trickle from my Eyes!
The Sighs on Pisgah did but typify
A second good Man shou'd hereafter die,
Whose Goodness shew'd the Way to Bliss Divine,
Like those whom Moses led to Palestine.
BURRIDGE! The pious, holy, good and just,
Too soon's reduced into silent Dust;
But most inexorable is the Fate,
Which wou'd not grant his Life a longer Date;
Whose talking, with Examples, shew'd Mankind
How he eternal Happiness might find.
This Loss I never can too much regret,
Ah! Too too soon his darling Virtue's set.
Alas! No more on Earth I'll hear that Voice,
Which made the heavenly Choire to rejoice.
And is he gone! --- Ah! ah! Too sure he's dead,
His Soul is in Elijah's Chariot fled:

*Yet cou'd I raise him from his present Sleep,
 'Tis Tears of Blood my wat'ry Eyes shou'd Weep :
 But hold--- forbear--- my Sorrows to exclaim,
 On what conducts him to eternal Fame.
 Methinks I hear descending Angels cry,
 Ascend blest BURRIDGE to thy native Sky ;
 For 'till you mount your bright seraphick Seat,
 The Joys of Heaven cannot be compleat.*

Not long after the Death of my Father, I commenced and took Degrees in the most extravagant Follies, and had such Delight in Vanity, that the Stoick could talk of me with no less Contempt and Derision, than the charitable *Christian* with as much Pity and Compassion ; whilst like a Man in a high Fever, I made a Felicity of my Distemper, by fancying in the Lightness of my Head I was amongst Angels, and in as glorious a Condition as they. Going to a Fencing-School, in a short Time I became so expert in the bloody Art of defacing God's Image, that I would quarrel with any Man upon the least Provocation at all ; and upon the slightest Punctilio of Honour, nothing but a Duel would mitigate what my haughty Spirit deem'd an Affront ; being so successful in all my Challenges, that in Eighteen Duels, both at home and beyond Sea, Fortune so much smil'd on my Sword, too often dy'd with a crimson Hue, but yet without Murder, that I always bore away the Palm from my Antagonists, without receiving a Wound in any Part of my Body. Being utterly averse to the Study of *Divinity*, my Mother was very desirous I should study the *Law*, by entering me into the honourable Society of the *Inner-Temple* ; but as I was of a giddy, inconstant, roving, fickle Mind, she would not presently buy me any Chambers there, but rented a couple of Chambers in *Symond's-Inn* in *Chancery-Lane*, to see first how close I might follow the Fatigue of revolving ancient Records, poring on old Statutes, and reading intricate Reports ; but what few Hours I could spare from my Pleasures, I only bestow'd on the Perusal of the Pleas of the Crown, whereby I might know how to plead for my self when I committed any criminal Matter ; or to attain at least to so much more Law than Honesty, as to be vexatious to him that had more Honesty than Law.

However,

However, in a little while, taking no more Diversion in pondering on the *Law*, than reading the *Gospel*, and withdrawal, receiving a Check from the Principal of the House; for my Laundress finding me in Bed with a *Bona Roba*, slighting my Study as much as I resented his Reprimand, I instantly carry'd off the Furniture of my Chambers, and bid adieu to the Inn. Bilking Bawdy-houses, Coaches, and Link-men, breaking Windows, and beating Watches, I made my common Pastime, till my Pocket paying too often for the Frolick, I had a great Aversion to the same; but more out of Fear of Charges, than any Inclination of becoming good; because, having no Respect at all for real Goodness, I would obstinately make my self incapable of either wholesome Council, or good Advice. So long as I kept my self sober my Conversation was delectable, and much coveted by Persons of either Sex, but when I was intoxicated in Liquor, I was a Terror to all Companies; being so mischievous, that it hath often been my Admiration that I have not shorten'd my Days, by coming to an untimely End for perpetrating some wilful Murder, or else sent to my long Home by those whom I have most grossly abus'd and insulted over, without any Respect of Person whatever. In all my lewd Pranks acted with Women of the Town, I never had the Misfortune to be contaminated with those Infections which are usually concomitant with venereal Sports; however, considering the Passions of Love could never be justly retaliated by such Harlots who were oblig'd to every new Face they saw for a Livelyhood, I suddenly withdrew my self from their bewitching Society, and valu'd not what Money it cost me to carry on the Intrigues of Love with some innocent Virgin, or married Woman, who was an absolute Stranger to the Embraces of any Man, but those of her Husband. In all my Devoirs to *Venus* I always prov'd very fortunate, for (but without a vain Conceit of my self do I speak it) I never laid Siege to the Fortress of any Female's Virtue, but a Capitulation was sounded before I retir'd from the Breaches. However, I had not such a good Opinion of my self, as too many of our Gallants have now a-days, as to think every Woman that look'd on me was in Love with my Person; nor was I so base as to scandalize the Innocence of those whom I knew not to be Immodest; and where I had broken a Commandment with any kind Gentlewoman, I would never kiss and tell: For

of all the Fair Ones whom I had deluded, I never blasted the Reputation of any, but Two; and that was an eminent Citizen's Daughter in *London*, whom I had withdrawn from Mr. *W^{illiam} L^{aw}*, Barrister of the *Middle-Temple*; and the other the Wife of a particular Friend whom I cast in a Suit of Law which he commenc'd against me for eloping with her: Nay, such was my inveterate Spleen against them, for, ignorantly, not designedly, betraying me in a Matter, which caus'd me to be confin'd at Mr. *Allen*'s the Messenger's House in the *Savoy*, the Space of Eleven Weeks, that I alienated my Affections, without ever speaking to 'em more.

Then, at the Persuasion of my Mother and other Friends, intending to change my Condition, I was married by Mr. *Polton*, the Jesuit (who was then *Incognito* in *England*) at the *Portuguese-Ambassador's* Chappel in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, after the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Church of Rome*, on *Thursday* the 18th of *August* 1692. But though the Copartner of my Fortunes was the Mirror of good Nature, Modesty and Virtue, descended of a truly good, honest and worthy Family of *Leominster* in *Herefordshire*, yet the Match was not over-pleasing to my Mother; who being also very much griev'd at my entring into the *Romish* Communion, for I had hid my Apostacy from her till now; she would often mind me how the poor *Church of England*, my Mother, did long to receive me again with Joy into her Bosom, and to kiss me with the Kisses of her Love, and to uncover to me her Breasts of Consolation; whence I need not draw the Wind of false Doctrine, nor fear the Blood of Tyranny and Oppession, but might suck in that sincere Milk, which would be my Soul's only true Nourishment hereafter.

Nevertheless I was resolutely bent to remain within the Pale of the *Church of Rome*, because it gave me a greater Latitude in Sin, than any Religion whatsoever. I was one also of a very nice Palate in eating, often chusing my Meat by its Cost and Rarity, not Use and Wholsomness, which verify'd the old Proverb, *What's far fetch'd and dear bought, is Meat for Gentlemen*. I always hated any Thing that was grave and serious, to avoid the Entertainment of good Thoughts; and nothing could put me in Mind of my Mortality but the Ringing of Bells, which still make me naturally Melancholly, wherefore I would then go out of their Sound

Sound as soon as I could, as supposing Age and Scarcity of my juvenile Blood would hereafter make Meditations on Death a Business of Course.

Being not Master of my own Mind, and finding the complaisant Humour and virtuous Carriage of my Wife, which seem'd to give her a Breeding fit for Heaven, had so far won my Mother's Heart, that she lov'd her as her own Child; I left her under her Government, with a Resolution of trying my Fortune beyond Sea; for a Descent being to be made upon a *French* Island in the *West-Indies*, I was resolv'd to go a Voluntier thither; but not so much out of an Ambition of being thought one that expos'd my Life for the Honour of my King and Country, as out of Self-Interest; for to the First I never took the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, as assuming the Crown of that unfortunate Prince, under whom I should have mounted the Pinnacle of Grandeur; as to the Latter, I had no such Obligation of spilling my Blood for the popular Applause of the old Eulogy, *He lies in the Bed of Honour*. This Island it seem'd was to be divided, in case it was subdu'd by the *English* Forces, among all the Survivors, according to their several Posts and Quality; so going to the *Isle of Wight*, with an Intent to leave my Wife behind me, I had not been there above Six Weeks, but she came to me, for fear of losing the Opportunity of ever seeing me again, and so earnestly entreated to go beyond Sea with me, that I could not deny her tender Suit. Then taking her on Board the *Burdeaux-Merchant*, a Ship of 150 Tuns, and Sir *Francis Wheeler* setting Sail about the Beginning of *January*, we met with a terrible Storm in the Bay of *Biscay*; but being tainted with *Atheism*, I had no Apprehension of the Danger of Death, for in the most dreadful and terrible Tempests I audaciously out-brav'd the Thoughts of it, by playing at Cards, Dice, Draughts, Tables, or *Mungus*. Now, the Occasion of my turning *Atheist* proceeded from the great Delight I took in reading *Lucretius* and *Lucian's Dialogues*; which pernicious Authors so poison'd my Reason, that publickly denying the Being of a Deity, and the Tenets of a Resurrection, Judgment, Heaven, or Hell, I have made my Auditors stand amaz'd, and not able to confute my impious Assertions, they have ceas'd any further Disputation, with the Saying of *Festus* to the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, *Thou art beside thy self, much Learning*

doth make thee mad. Yet by the way, let me ingeniously confess, that I was allur'd more out of Novelty than firm Opinion to imbrace atheistical Notions, for truly such a prophane Proselyte seems, only in Practice, not in Reality, what he cannot be indeed; for I never heard nor read in all my Life of any real *Atheist*, but what at the Point of Death own'd a Godhead, and with Fear and Horror dreaded the Departure into a future State.

Touching at *Madera*, where I was kindly entertain'd by several Priests on Shore; about the Beginning of *March* we came to an Anchor at *Bridge-Town* in *Barbadoes*, where, after Three Weeks Refreshment at the House of one Major *Andrews*, we set sail again, and came to an Anchor in *Marine-Bay* at *Martineco*, where several Beacons being set on fire, as a Signal to the Inhabitants all over the Country, that an Enemy was to come to invade it the next Morning early, being on *Sunday*, General *Foulkes* landed, after some Opposition made by the *French*, with a Detachment of 20 Men out of his Regiment, Colonel *Goodwin's* Regiment, and out of 4 Companies of the Duke of *Bolton's* Regiment, with 1500 *Barbadians*, that went Voluntiers upon their own Cost and Charges. Next Day Admiral *Wheeler* went on Shore with the Remainder of the Army, and the Marines, at which Time I also landed with him, and joining General *Foulkes*, we put all to Fire and Sword for the Length of 7 Miles. Then the whole Army going on Board again, we weigh'd Anchor, and came before *Fort-Royal*; but a Council of War holding it not proper to attack it, by reason it was strengthen'd with very strong Fortifications, besides, having above 100 Pieces of Brass-Canon planted on it; we sail'd from thence to *Blagster*, where the whole Army landing on *Easter-Monday*, and the *French* having the Courage to give us Battle, a most sharp and bloody Fight ensu'd betwixt us, which held near 4 Hours, insomuch that we lost 500 Men in the Engagement; but the Enemy, who were much superior to us in Number, lost thrice as many. In this sharp Dispute it was observ'd by Admiral *Wheeler* I behav'd my self with such an undaunted Bravery and Courage, although the Dead fell like Hops on the Right and Left of me, that he was pleas'd to make me his Secretary; but obtaining a signal Victory over the *French*, next Day the Army lay down before the Town of *Blagster*, when a Message coming to me from my Wife, a Barge presently carried

ried me on Board the *Dunkirk*, a Third Rate Ship, where I found my Spouse in Tears, with Colonel *Goodwin's* Lady, and several other Officers Wives, who were condoling each other, for fear the unlucky Hand of Fate should make them Widows.

At my Wife's earnest Persuasion I remain'd with her, and 4 Days after both the Admiral and General came on Board again their respective Ships, with the Men under their Command, they having broke up the Siege of themselves, because they could not agree about the Plunder. Then we went to *Dominica*, where, whilst the Fleet was taking fresh Water, I and my Wife went a-shore with several Officers and their Wives to take a View of this Island, which is inhabited only by wild *Indians*; afterwards returning on Board, we set sail again; and now the Plague raging most violently, even among Officers, Soldiers and Seamen, so harden'd was I amidst my Cups, that I made it but a mere Scoff and a May-game, to see poor Men lie bleeding to Death at the Fundament above Deck, and thrown Nine or Ten in a Day Over-board for a Bait to the Fish, which lay in the deep Receptacles of the vast Ocean: Reaching *Montserrat*, the whole Fleet lay by, till Sir *Francis Wheeler* and I went to take a Repast a-shore for Three or Four Hours; then returning on Board, we made the best of our Way to *St. Christopher's*, where we came to an Anchor in *Old-Road*, and put all the sick Men on Shore: But the Contagion not ceasing, after some Days lying there, they were fetch'd on Board again; and after a Day or Two sailing my Wife was took very ill, insomuch that her Life was despair'd of, but (by God's Blessing) through her being well kept and look'd after, as well as the Conveniency of a Residence on the liquid Element could afford, she was perfectly recover'd by that Time we arriv'd at *New-England*, where the Governor obliging us to perform a Quarantine, the sick Men were put a-shore on little Isles adjacent to the main Land, but Officers and the like were permitted to go into *Boston*, the chief Town of this Country, whersin I resided about a Month. By this Time the Men being well, and put on Board, we sail'd over the Banks of *Newfoundland*, which was very dangerous sailing, till we came and cast Anchor in *Placentia-Bay*, belonging to the French; who had there a Colony, which we durst not attack by reason of the many Men which we had lost by the

Sword and Sickness in this Expedition. Then we sail'd to the Bay of *Bulls*, a Colony belonging to the *English* in *Newfoundland*, where I and my Wife lay Three Weeks a-shore, and from whence the *Dunkirk*, with Two or Three more Men of War, being sent to *St. John's*, another Colony belonging to the *French* in this Island, they bombarded it to the Ground ; then after their joining us again, we weigh'd Anchor in order to return home ; but within Three or Four Days after setting Sail, we met with a most violent Storm, which dispersed the whole Fleet : However, Fortune so favouring us that it blew the right Course, the *William and Mary*, a Ship of about 400 Tuns (in which I was oblig'd to be, by reason Sir *Francis Wheeler* had several Hogsheads of *Galetia* on Board it) brought us safe, by the Help of a Pilot, into *King-Road* (a large Haven betwixt *England* and *Wales*) about the latter End of *October*, 1693.

Here going a-shore, and receiving a Letter from Sir *Francis Wheeler* that he was safe arriv'd in *Car-water*, in the *Resolution*, a Third Rate Ship, in which he hoisted his Flag, on the Fore-mast-top, I presently rid Post for *Plymouth*, at the same Time leaving Orders for my Wife to come after me by the first Opportunity. Here my Wife begging I would not go to Sea again, I granted her Boon, in resigning up my Place ; a little after this Resignation, perform'd with great Reluctancy, I was took so dangerously ill with the Spotted Fever, that being given over both by Doctors and Apothecaries, nothing but surrendring my last Breath was expected every Moment. This great Visitation happen'd according as it had been calculated by the *Astrologers* afore-mention'd ; but the Almighty being pleas'd to restore me to perfect Health, and in my solitary Retirement in the Country making serious Reflections on the great Dangers I escap'd in the midst of Storms and Tempests, Duels and Battle, Plague and Perils of Drowning, I have thought to my self that God by his providential Care of my Person was graciously pleas'd to work such Preservation for some extraordinary Purpose, best known to his own unsearchable Wisdom ; and with King *Agrippa*, *I was almost persuaded to be a Christian*. However (with Confusion and Shame do I speak it) my good Intention of becoming a good *Christian* was but almost indeed, not wholly one ; for no sooner was I taking my Pipe over a Bottle of Wine, with my profligate Companions, but it was still

my

my Ambition not to be exceeded by them in Prophaneness.

No sooner was I recover'd from the Brink of the Grave, but my dear Wife was laid down with the same Distemper, however, by God's leave overcame it; after which we came to *Bristol*, where, on *Wednesday* the 17th of *April*, 1695. my Wife (after many Miscarriages) was brought to Bed of a Boy, christen'd *William*, which died at 8 Days old, and was there buried in *St. Peter's* Church-yard. I had also Three other Sons (never any Girls) by her; one born in the Parish of *St. Giles's* in the Fields, on *Saturday* the 25th of *June*, 1697. nam'd *Emanuel*, and died on *Friday* the 7th of *January* following; and Two Sons now surviving, the first born in the Parish of *St. Clement-Danes*, on *Saturday* the 30th of *November*, 1700. being the Festival of *St. Andrew*, and baptized *Edward* by Name; and the other born in the same Parish, on *Tuesday* the 30th of *October*, 1704. and christen'd *Richard William*.

After I came to *England*, having with my Wife led a Country-Life for above Two Years, and being then desirous to see my Friends, we took a Journey to *London*, where I found my Mother and Sister dress'd in a sable Attire at the News of our being cast away and drown'd; but no sooner did they with great Wonder and Astonishment behold us, but their mourning Weeds were thrown off with as much Joy, as before put on with Grief and Sorrow; and our happy Meeting was express'd in as passionate a manner as that of *Joseph* and *Jacob*, when he cry'd, *Now let me die, since I have seen thy Face, because thou art yet alive*. At this Time my Mother lived with my Sister, who had been married about a Year before my Father died; but shortly after Renting a House my self, I took my Mother to my Habitation, with whom I and my Wife liv'd in great Comfort, Love, and Unity for near Three Years, and then departing this Life, as I sat on her Dying-Bed, on *Friday* the 6th of *May*, 1698. her Death I could not but commemo-rate in this elegiack Strain.

Ye sacred Muses! wait on me to weep,
And let your solemn Sighs, like mine, be deep;
Since Destiny, the Instrument of Fate,
My loving Mother do's from me translate.

Much might be said upon her Maiden-Life,
 But much more on her Virtues, when a Wife;
 For she a Pattern was of Modesty,
 That she Companion for the Bless'd might be;
 And as she holy liv'd, so did she die,
 Rejoycing in the Lord continually.
 Endu'd she was with matchless Faith, and Love,
 To obtain the Joys laid up for such above:
 All Pride contemn'd, and Vanity did hate,
 As Crimes obnoxious to a blessed State.
 Not deeming second Marriage to be good,
 Time cou'd not make her change her Widowhood;
 She to the last withstood each Woer's Art,
 That Son and Daughters might possess her Heart.
 Was I to count her Virtues by her Tears,
 The greatest Number in the first appears;
 And tho' she past the Climacterick Line,
 Yet did she quickly after, Life resign;
 Nay, freely yielded her most fragrant Breath,
 To live in endless Blessings after Death.

After my dearly beloved Mother was Interr'd by my Father in the green Church-yard in St. Martin's in the Fields, at their own Desire, as being more private than that which lies open to the Street, being griev'd at the Loss of her, and my Child a little before, it was not long e'er I went to Holland, with an Intent to see the Jubilee celebrated at Rome by Pope Clement XI. But one Sunday Night losing at Dice above 100 Guinea's and Pistoles with some Gentlemen at the Hague, it spoil'd my Journey; and I was obliged to return back again to the Brill, where one Madam Hugger smart, a young Gentlewoman, taking Compassion on my Misfortunes, she kindly entertain'd me at Bed and Board in her own House, without giving her Husband any Suspicion for Jealousy at her Benevolence, and put Money in my Pocket at my Departure, for which she was heartily sorry; so landing at Harwich, I made the best of my way for London, where I was joyfully welcom'd by my Wife, who was much against my going from her.

Though my licentious Life did not shew any sign of Religion in me, yet did I often endeavour to turn my Wife to be a Papist; but prevailing neither by fair or foul means to work her Conversion, for she said, though her Love for

for me incited her to imbrace Matrimony after the Rites of the Church of *Rome*, yet she would never deviate from the Principles of the *Church of England*, in which she had been most carefully educated; I left her to her own Will, which also took care of religiously bringing up my Children in the same Faith. On Fasts, or Days of Abstinence, as appointed according to the Rubrick of the Establish'd Church, I would eat Flesh to choose; and the common Course of my Life, and ordinary Conversation was to loath and abhor any Thing that founded of *Christianity*. I was not without Faults in Abundance, and therefore my enormous Way of living made People often taint me with Crimes which I never committed; but for all my Wickedness, I had never any false Aspersions cast on me, or wrong'd by any one, whom God did not punish by Fire, sudden Death, or reducing to extream Poverty. Going once to see some Acquaintance at the University of *Cambridge*, and lying in *Jesus-College*, I poison'd the Understanding of several of the Collegians there, by making my most beloved and plausible Vices pass currently for unquestionable Virtues; and though they endeavour'd by Dint of Argument to convince me of the Truth of the Apostle's Proposition, *That Godliness is great Gain*; yet would not I allow it, unless they would grant me that this was a Logical Conversion, and not to be question'd, *That great Gain is Godliness*. So long as I had Shifts enough left me, such as dissembling Language, covert Engagements, cunning Flatteries, treacherous Compositions, petty Contributions, and under-hand Compliances in all my Actions, I thought I wanted no honest Evasions to secure my odious Reputation among my wicked Associates. Too often have I seem'd to grudge the poor brute Animals their Irrationality, and to share with them, endeavour'd by a Sensuality to degrade my self into a Beast, or, at least, to become as like one as Humanity would permit me. Vice was the very Quintessence of that Honour I most coveted in this World; any new invented Sin I proclaimed a qualifying Virtue; the fortunate Success I have had in Wickedness, made me only repent I practised it no sooner; I have laugh'd at all wholsom Instruction, if he that presum'd to give it me, was nothing of a Scholar; and my irreligious Practices have made me thoughts neither Church nor State worth my regarding, but rather encourage me

to behold both Vessels split at once, and in the mean Time flatter my self up with the devilish Hopes of raising my Fortunes by the miserable Wreck.

After the Accession of Queen *ANNE* to the Throne, whom God long preserve to Reign over us, having an Order granted me by the Lords of the Admiralty at their Office, for the Regulating Captains to allow me what Imprest-Gangs I demanded, to imprest as many Men as would Man a Third Rate Ship in Three Weeks, for a Reward whereof I was to have a Captain Lieutenant's Post in a Ship of the same Rate; I imprest no less than 189 Men in the Space of Six Days, but the Charges of maintaining Three, and sometimes Four Gangs, which daily waited on me, amounting to more than what would purchase such a Post, and the Lords of the Admiralty denying me any Consideration to ease my Purse, I left off the Performance of my Order at the Loss of 30 Pounds. My irregular Courses having reduced me now to a very low Condition, Necessity obliged me to seek a Livelihood by my Pen, which in a very little Time depriv'd me of my Liberty; for writing a Libel which lampoon'd the *Dutch*, by burlesquing our Church-Catechism, and to clear the Printer, who was took into Custody for Printing it, I surrender'd my self to Sir *Edward Clark*, Knight and Alderman of *London*; before whom owning and subscribing my self to be the Author of the aforesaid Libel, my *Mittimus* was made for *Newgate*. In December 1702. I was indicted and arraigned at the Sessions-House in the *Old-Baily*; and after a long Tryal held before Judge *Powel*, and Sir *Samuel Dashwood*, Knight, Lord-Mayor of *London*, the Jury brought in their Verdict, which found me Guilty. Then Sir *Salathiel Lovel*, Knight, Recorder, making a learned Oration, which seem'd to make my Crime most diabolical and malicious, in not only ridiculing the *Summary of the Christian Faith*, but that it also most grossly reflected on the States of *Holland*, and therefore was construed as if I had a Design to break the Alliance between the *Queen* and their *High-Mightinesses*; his Worship then proceeded to pass Sentence on me, which was to stand in the Pillory at the End of *Chancery-Lane* in *Fleet-street*, *Cheapside-Conduit*, and the *Royal-Exchange*, with an Inscription setting forth my Crime over my Head; to have the Libel burnt before my Face at each Place, by the

Hand

Hand of the Common Hangman; and fined 40 Pounds to the Two Sheriffs. Whilst I was a Prisoner of State, I was very well maintain'd by the Party that espous'd my Side; and by the Intercession of some Friends, Sir *Robert Bedingfield*, and Sir *Samuel Gerard*, Baronet, taking my Bond to Pay them 20 Pounds apiece, but would never sue me for Non-Payment, provided I kept my Pen for the future from libelling Church and State, I obtain'd my Freedom after a Year's Confinement; but about a Week before my enjoying the common Liberty of Mankind, my Misfortunes breaking my only Sister *Sarah's* Heart, she died with Grief, and the News thereof affecting me very much, I could not but lament her Death in this Epitaph, as I view'd her Grave in the Church-yard of St. *Clement-Danes*.

*Here, here the best of Sisters lies,
In sure and certain Hopes to rise,
Whose Grief, for my Confinement, made
Her Soul fly to th' Elysian Shade.
So when this hallow'd Ground I see,
I pity her Catastrophe;
And, with as solemn Grief, I must
Lament the Relicks of her Dust.
But when the dreadful Trump shall sound,
To wake the sleeping Nations round,
Then do I hope, our Meeting-Place,
Will be before the Throne of Grace.*

Not long after this Tribulation a Subpœna being serv'd on me by *Robert Stephens*, Messenger of the Press, to appear in Chancery, to Answer a Complaint of the Stationer's Company, exhibited against me for writing a Thing, which was prohibited from being vended by Virtue of an Injunction granted by *Sir Nathan Wright*, Lord-Keeper of the Broad-Seal; it put me to a great deal of Trouble, altho' by the Favour of his Grace the Duke of Kent, the Lady *Frecheville*, and the Lady *Heriot Godolphin*, they procur'd me the Queen's Authority for Publishing the same; and to secure the Propriety thereof to my self, it was enter'd in the Signet-Office at Whitehall, sign'd by his Grace the Duke of *Buckingham*, then Lord-Keeper of the Privy-Seal. But seeing they maintain'd that the Prerogative of the Crown was not above the Power of their Patent, which invested

the Right of printing Almanacks, or Kalendars, solely in the Stationer's Company, I would not dispute their Title to the uttermost, when my Printer, who was to be an equal Sharer with me in my Projection, would not stand by me in the Cause. Next a Pamphlet, which I writ, being resented by the Societies of the Reformation of Manners in the City of *London*, because the Lewdness thereof tended much to the seducing both young Men and Maids to Debauchery, Sir *Salathiel Lovel*'s Warrant was issued out against me and the Printer, who being took up and bound over by Sir *Thomas Stamp*, Knight and Alderman of *London*, to answere the Printing thereof, I absconded. Then the Printer traversing the Indictment found against him, next by a *Certiorari* he remov'd the Matter into the Crown; and although a Writ of *Procedendo* was order'd to bring him back to the original Court for Tryal, he was nevertheless try'd at the Queen's Bench in *Guildhall*, and cast for Printing the same in *Trinity-Term*, 1707. The *Michaelmas-Term* following the Printer being summon'd by Mr. *Adams*, the City-Solicitor, to appear at the Queen's Bench-Bar in *Westminster-Hall*; being in Court on the Day appointed, Sir *Salathiel Lovel*, and the Common Serjeant being Council for the City of *London*, demanding Judgment to be pass'd on him, Sir *Edward Northey*, once Attorney-General, and Sir *Robert Raymond*, at present Solicitor-General, being Council for the Defendant, they, by several learned Arguments, not only prov'd the Pamphlet not to be a Libel, as the Council against them alledged, but also shew'd the Prosecution was founded on a wrong Indictment; whereupon the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice *Holt*, with the rest of the Reverend Judges of the Queen's Bench, acquitted the Printer, as not guilty of any Misdeameanor; and their Opinion must of course then clear me in being the Author of the Pamphlet. However, the City being dissatisfied at their being thus Cast; and being one Day in *March* 1707-8. set at the Castle-Tavern in *Fleet-street*, one Mr. *Wats*, the City-Marshal serv'd the Recorder's Warrant on me for writing the aforesaid Pamphlet. I was carried before Sir *William Wibbers*, Knight, Lord-Mayor of *London*, where it was propos'd to me to leave the Kingdom, or else the City was resolv'd to sue me to the uttermost of their Power, by the Ecclesiastical or Canon Laws; whereupon being sensible how

how chargeable it would be in *Doctors-Commons*, where I should certainly be cast, and being also at the same Time under a Censure of the Spiritual Court, I acquiesced to their Proposal, and went into *Ireland*, from whence I came into *Scotland*, where I was most civilly entertain'd both at the University of *Glasgow* and *Edinburgh*, and then return'd Home to my Wife and Family in the Liberty of *Westminster*, on the 17th of *April*, 1709.

While this Printer, I last spoke of, was at Law with the City, he most earnestly begg'd and pray'd of me not to absent his House, because it would be the Ruin of him; so being more generous than to leave him at this Time of Distress, I frequently went thither as I us'd to do; and at his making dumb Signs at what extraordinary Charges he was put to in defending himself against the City, and fearing he might betray me, I gave him a Bond for bearing part of his Charges; which made him then so Insolent, that he attempted to have me at his Beck when he pleas'd; but my Soul despising the Insolence of such a mean sorry Fellow who liv'd by the Production of my Brain, so that I would not be submitting to his Arrogancy, he arrested me several Times; and lastly, being in Custody at a Sponging-House in *Clare-street* for above a Fortnight, where we could come to no Agreement, I went to the *Gatehouse-Prison* at *Westminster*, in *November*, 1711. as resolving then not to come to any Terms upon the Bond which his Villany extorted from me, for neither Goods nor Value receiv'd; and furthermore made another Resolution of never demeaning my small Knowledge again with writing any more such insignificant small Pamphlets of half a Sheet, or a whole one. I have already obliged the World with *The Gazetteer's Select History of Europe*, with Maps of my own Projecting; and, God willing, a close Pursuit of my Studies shall, when at Liberty, bring to Perfection the following Works, namely, *The Trader's Dictionary*; *Poems on several Emergent Occasions*; *The British Pacquet open'd*; *Pseudo-theon: Or, The History of the Heathen Gods mentioned in the Scriptures*; *Lucretius with Notes*; *The British Kalendar*; *Richardi Burridgei Lectiones orientales, cum Versione Latina*; *The British Chronology*; *Herodotus translated*; and *Biblia sacra ex hebreo Latine redditâ, & Annotationibus illustrata*, *Authore Richardo Burridgeo*; which have been partly the elaborate Performance of 20 Years, to the great impairing

of my Health, by bringing on me, thro' Colds and Nocturnal Watches, the Rheumatism and violent Defluxion in my Eyes; being so bad that the Loss of one being fear'd by the most famous Oculists and Chyrurgeons: After all their Experiments try'd on me, I seach'd what Physical Authors I had in my Study, and by conversing with the Dead, found out a Remedy which restor'd the most dangerous Eye to Sight again.

The several Times of my Confinement happened according to the Prediction of those who calculated my Nativity; but nevertheless I am such an Infidel to the Art of Astrology, that I take all their Figures, Schemes, and Calculations to be no other than guess-work. Whilst I was a Prisoner in the Gatehouse-Prison at Westminster, there being no right Understanding betwixt me and William Taylor the Keeper thereof, because not knowing his Duty, I would make him sensible of it, so that all Men in his Custody should not be insulted over and impos'd on as they had been, he suborn'd Four Prisoners to swear Blasphemy against me, for which I was convicted before the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice Parker, and the Right Honourable Sir Robert Beachcroft, Knight, Lord-Mayor of London; and Sentence was pass'd on me to stand in the Pillory at Charing-Cross, and just without Temple-Bar in the Strand; and to suffer Imprisonment for a Year. But though this Accusation was false and most malicious, yet had I not suffer'd unjustly, I had not been brought to a due Sense of my Sins; whereas, on the contrary, I impute this Scandal to be a Production of God's Providence for the making me a good Man, through the pious Instructions of Mr. Lorrain, the Ordinary of Newgate, who did me not only the Favour of Preaching at my Request Two excellent Sermons in the Chappel there, both Forenoon and Afternoon, on Sunday the 25th of May, 1712. and at the Request of several Gentlemen preach'd the same again the Sunday following, choosing for his Text these words, *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise (as some Men count Slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance,* 2 Pet. Chap. III. ver. 9. But also he will have the Honour of making the greatest Atheist in the last or present Age, sincerely perform that Petition in the Liturgy, which implores God's Grace, for the leading hereafter a godly, righteous,

teous, and sober Life, as having abjur'd and recanted Atheism and Popery, in the Chappel of Newgate, on Sunday the 6th of July, 1712. and enter'd into the Pale of the Church of England again.

An Account of what pass'd on the Tryal of Mr. Richard Burridge, for Blasphemy, at the Sessions-House in the Old-Baily, on Friday the 2d of May, 1712.

ON Wednesday Night, the last Day of April, 1712. the following Summons was sent to me, then a Prisoner in the Gatehouse-Prison at Westminster.

Mr. Richard Burridge,

*Domina Regina contra
Richardum Burridge.*

TAKE Notice that the Indictment preferred and found against you last Sessions, at Hicks's-Hall, for divers Contempts and Misdemeanors, will be try'd on Friday next, the 2d Day of May, at Ten of the Clock in the Forenoon of the same Day, at the Sessions of Oyer and Terminer, for the County of Middlesex, at Justice-Hall in the Old-Baily. This being the 30th Day of April, 1712.

Hen. Courthope, Sollicitor pro Prosecutore.

On Friday Morning the 2d of May following, being convey'd in a Coach from the Gatehouse-Prison at Westminster to the Sessions-House in the Old-Baily, betwixt the Hours of Eleven and Twelve in the Forenoon I was set to the Bar; then the Clerk of the Arraignments read my Indictment, which charg'd me with drinking, in the Company of several other Persons, a Health to the Confusion of Almighty God; a Health to the Devil our Master; and Damnation to the Resurrection. To which I pleaded not guilty; and then withdrew.

About Two Hours after, being set to the Bar again, and challenging my Jury impannell'd for the County of Middlesex, they were severally shew'd me, as sworn one by one; but knowing none of the Gentlemen, to give the Court as little Trouble as might be, I made no Exceptions against any of them; so referring the Justice of my Cause solely to their Consciences, I put my self on my Tryal. Then Two

Two Council for the Queen declaring the Reason of their appearing against me, the Prisoner at the Bar, and demanding that I might put in my Plea to the Crime whereof I stood indicted, I then beg'd the Favour of having the Use of Pen, Ink, and Paper, on my Tryal, which being granted by the Court, the Witnesses were call'd; the first whereof was one *John Legg*, who depos'd, *That Richard Burridge, the Prisoner at the Bar, did in Company of one Richard Keele, George Milson, William Lane, not yet took, and a certain Gentlewoman, whose Name he could not call to mind, drank the following Healths on the 8th and 13th Days of January, 1711-12. to wit, Confusion to Almighty God; a Health to the Devil our Master; and Damnation to the Resurrection.*

Here the Lord Chief Justice *Parker* sifting the Evidence backwards and forwards, who positively insisted in his Deposition; his Lordship ask'd me if I had any thing to object against the Witness; but desiring all the Queen's Witnesses might proceed in their Depositions, I would then answer to what they would swear against me. Then one *Brotherston*, a *Scotchman*, getting on the Block, he swore as heartily and falsly as the other, that I did drink the aforesaid Healths.

Next, one *Owen Wait* depos'd, *That the Prisoner at the Bar did drink a Health to the Devil his Master, in his bearing; but could not accuse him of uttering any other profane Expression.*

Lastly, one *John Maybank* depos'd, *That such Healths (as above-mention'd) were drank by Richard Burridge, but believ'd they were not really done out of any natural Inclination of himself to be guilty of such impious Expressions; but that through the excessive drinking of Jeneva, which he and his Company had in by whole Quarts at a Time; he was the rather incited to pledge such wicked Healths, through the Allurements of Richard Keele, who first began to drink such abominable Healths.*

Thus these Four Witnesses having upon Oath depos'd these blasphemous Healths were drank by *Richard Burridge*, the Lord Chief Justice *Parker* ask'd me, What I had to say for my self? In my own Defence I reply'd, That the first Witness against me, *John Legg*, was now actually a Debtor in the *Gatehouse*, whose Modesty (tho' well stricken in Years) would permit him to sing and talk more Debau-chery

chery in a Day than ever Rochester writ in a Year ; but because Keele, and Milson and I, excluded him sometimes out of the Charity coming into that Prison, as being discharg'd of his Action, he bore us all a Grudge ; moreover, this Deponent pretending to have been a Barrister at Law, I cannot but take notice with an Afterism of Admiration of the Meanness of his Spirit, as well as Principle, that could cheat a Poor Woman, who was his Fellow-Prisoner, out of Six Pence, to draw her up a Petition, but getting the Money, never writ her any ; however, it was the unfortunate Creature's good Luck to be acquitted of what she was accus'd, by this honourable Court, at the Sessions held here in February last past : But to come closer to the Matter, I admire this Deponent, as well as the rest, did not take Cognizance of these blasphemous Speeches, as my Indictment calls them, before the 27th of February 1711-12. which is a great while after the 8th and 13th of January, contrary to a Statute in such Cases provided, which says, *That an Information of Blasphemy must be given upon Oath, before some Justice of the Peace, within Four Days.*

As to Brotherton, who swears against me just the very same as Legg did ; he was about the latter End of November, or Beginning of December last, committed a Prisoner to the Gatehouse, upon Warrant, for speaking scurrilous Words against Her Majesty, in impudently saying, *The Queen was the Duke of Marlborough's Gallant.* But his being bail'd out before Christmas last, and never coming to see any Body in the Gatehouse till the February following, is a Paradox to me how he should hear what I said on the 8th and 13th Days of January ; therefore, if his Oath is not Perjury in the superlative Degree, that Crime hath never been committed in this Court.

'Tis true, Owen Wait, a Chair-man, who had been also a Prisoner in the Gatehouse, for wounding the Right Honourable the Marquis of Carmarthen, being somewhat more conscious than the rest, in swearing, he only deposes that he heard me drink nothing but a Health to the Devil my Master ; therefore, I hope your Lordship, with the rest of the honourable Court, will be pleas'd to take this Contradiction so far into your most wise Consideration, as to consider on the Invalidity of them, who have already sworn against me.

The good Principles and Probity of *John Maybank*, now actually a Prisoner in the *Gatehouse* for Debt, may be evidently seen by his ungenteel, base Action of writing malicious Letters to his Fellow-Prisoners Friends, and Adversaries, whereby he extorts Money out of them for telling them a Parcel of notorious Lies, to the great Detriment of them whom he writes against, as he did particularly by *Richard Keele*, in sending treacherous Letters to his Wife; which so much exasperated her against her Husband, that she never came near him afterwards, and in Three Months Time sent him but Ten Pence to subsist on; but his Villany beiny detected, *Richard Keele* stab'd him in the Arm with *George Milson's* Knife, and the wounding him in Three several Places in his Arm was justified by *William Taylor*, Keeper of the *Gatehouse*: Again, the Honesty of this Deponent may be plainly seen, by permitting his last Wife, who daily comes to him, though his first Wife is yet alive, to defraud poor Prisoners of their Money, which they give her to buy them Necessaries; particularly one Lieutenant *Stephen Gellot*, who lately gave her wherewithal to buy him a Pair of Shooes; but as yet she hath bought him none, nor never will: Also this *John Maybank* being a Fellow as much addicted to *Onan's* Sin as a certain Jesuit, who delighting therein by the Assistance of a young Virgin, to whom he would say, when he had the Effects of his Carnality in his Hand, *Ecce ex quo luto Homines nascuntur*; he once committed the odious Fact upon *George Milson* whilst drunk, but the Titillation awaking him, he, in Abhorrence of his inhumane Lechery, had like to have broke his Neck, by throwing him down a Pair of Stairs. So that these are the true Reasons, spoken without any Prejudice or Malice, why he hates *Keele* and *Milson*; and hath also an Antipathy against me, for often threatening to expose him in Print, for his beastly Actions, which he hath offer'd to perpetrate on several Prisoners, whom he thought might be inclinable to his Sodomitick Lust.

Then (after a long Tryal) having above Twenty Persons of good Credit in and about the Court, to speak for my Reputation, I order'd the Cryer of the Court to call them; the first whereof was one Mr. *Edward Midwinter*, a Printer; but the Lord Chief Justice baffling him in his Evidence, by reflecting on my formerly libelling the *States of Holland*, for which I had undergone the Censure of the Law, I would not

not call any more ; whereupon his Lordship gave his Charge to the Jury, and I withdrew from the Bar.

After *Richard Keele* and *George Milson* had severally been call'd to plead to the Indictment preferred against them, for uttering the same blasphemous Expressions ; the first of which making but a short Defence for himself, and the other being altogether Illiterate, could say but little or nothing to the Accusation alledg'd against him, I was set to the Bar again ; when the Jury coming in with their Verdict, and the Clerk of the Arraignments asking them how they found us, the Foreman (with the Consent of the rest) brought us in all Three guilty of a Misdemeanor. Then the Right worshipful Sir *Peter King*, Knight, Recorder of *London*, asking the Prisoners what they had to say for themselves, before Sentence was past upon them according to Law, *Richard Burridge* spoke as follows,

“ May it please the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, and Mr. Recorder. I shall not be so Impertinent as to go about to presume to Arraign the Justice of this honourable Court, by reason, according to the Depositions of the several Witnesses for the Queen, I am fairly cast by my Peers, for uttering most horrible, diabolical, heinous, and most wicked Expressions, of which, I solemnly profess before God and Man, I am really as innocent as the Child unborn. But, with Submission, give me leave to say, that the Persons who have sworn against me, have maliciously been false Witnesses, not only out of a mortal Hatred they bear to me for Matters recited on my Tryal, but also to please *William Taylor*, to whom they have been and are still oblig'd, for the Favour of giving them Credit for Chamber-Rent and Liquors. Moreover, there being not a right Understanding betwixt me and that extortioning Fellow, vulgarly called *Captain Taylor*, though he never bore a Captain's Commission in all his Life, and whom I detected in several barbarous Actions exerted towards his Prisoners ; he, for several sinister Ends, hath fomented this unhappy Matter, and grounded this malicious Prosecution on no other Foundation, than that of Mr. Keele's having an uncommon, (tho' usual with him) Oath in his Cups or Passion, which was this, *Damn my Resurrection*. But tho' (I must acknowledge) it is a very bad Expression, to curse one of the fundamental Points of the Christian Religion,

“ ligion, which is a main Article of the *Creed*, compil’d
“ by the *Twelve Apostles*, on the Authority of *Canonical*
“ *Writs*; yet I hope it is not *Blasphemy*, as being not a
“ prophane Expression utter’d against any of the Persons
“ in the *Holy Trinity*. Again, as for that Clause in the In-
“ dictment, which accuses me with drinking a *Health to*
“ the *Devil my Master*; I cannot perceive (though at the
“ same Time I must own it devilish and highly wicked in
“ one respect) how it can be *Blasphemy* to drink either to,
“ or against that infernal Regent: For, according to the
“ Etymology of the Word, I find it is only an *Evil-speaking*
“ against the *Deity* in any of the *Three Persons*; and
“ in some Sense to speak evil or *opprobrius* Words against
“ good Men may be call’d *Blasphemy*, though not so crimi-
“ nal as that utter’d against the great *Creator of Heaven*
“ and *Earth*. But nevertheless, in Case the whole Accu-
“ sation laid to my Charge be all *Blasphemy*, why then I
“ appeal to the Statute made in the 9th and 10th of *Wil-*
“ *liam the Third*, which is thus Enacted, *That such Per-*
“ *sons as shall by writing, teaching, or advisedly speaking,*
“ *deny one of the Persons in the holy Trinity to be God, or af-*
“ *sert or maintain there are more Gods than one, or deny the*
“ *Christian Religion to be true, or the Scriptures to be of di-*
“ *vine Authority, and be thereof convicted, they shall for*
“ *the first Offence be incapable to enjoy any Office, Ecclesiasti-*
“ *cal, Civil, or Military; and for the second Offence shall*
“ *be disabled to sue or prosecute any Action at Law or*
“ *Equity, or capable of any Legacy or Deed of Gift, and*
“ *suffer Three Years Imprisonment without Bail. No Person*
“ *shall be prosecuted by Virtue of this Act for Words spo-*
“ *ken, unless the Information be given upon Oath, before*
“ *some Justice of the Peace, within Four Days, and the Pro-*
“ *secution be within Three Months after such Information.*
“ *Persons convicted of any the said Crimes shall, for the*
“ *first Offence (upon renouncing such erroneous Opinions, in*
“ *the Court where convicted, within Four Months after)*
“ *be discharg’d from all Penalties incur’d by such Con-*
“ *viction. But the Impiety of Fortune is such on my Side,*
“ *that I am brought in guilty of a Misdemeanor, and*
“ *therefore dread the Punishment (justly to be inflicted*
“ *on me, according to the Depositions of the Queen’s Evi-*
“ *dences) will be greater than I can bear; especially if it*
“ *be according to the spiteful Intention of my sworn Ene-*

“ *mies,*

“mies, who would not only rejoice to see me suffer some
“corporal Punishment, but would also wish an heavy Fine
“laid upon me, whereby I may be depriv’d, thro’ Non-
“payment of it, from taking the Benefit of the Act,
“pass’d this Sessions of Parliament, for the Relief of In-
“solvent Debtors. However, I solemnly protest once
“more that I am wrongfully accus’d, wherefore I humbly
“implore so much Favour from this honourable Bench, as
“to take into your most judicious Consideration the Inva-
“lidity of the Witnesses, who indeed are and were Pri-
“soners of no Credit or Reputation; and that it being
“also my unfortunate Condition to have been a Prisoner
“in the *Gatehouse* these Six Months, and not long before
“Sixteen Months more in *Newgate*, for the same Debt,
“though a very unjust one; but only my Circumstances
“are such at present, that I cannot defend my self against
“the illegal Proceedings of a *villanous Adversary*, I im-
“plore so much Pity and Compassion may flow from the
“inexhaustible Fountain of your Clemency, as will incite
“you to mingle Mercy with Justice, by making my Pu-
“nishment as light as your great Wisdom shall think fit.

The other Two Prisoners, *Richard Keele* and *George Milson* saying nothing to the Court to alleviate their Punishment, then the Right Worshipful Sir *Peter King*, Knight, Recorder of *London*, after some Consultation held with the Right Honourable Sir *Robert Beachcroft*, Knight, Lord-Mayor of *London*, making an Harangue, which elegantly set forth the Heinousness of the Crime whereof we stood convicted, his Worship next proceeded to pass Sentence on us, which was to stand twice in the Pillory, and to suffer Imprisonment for a Year; which Order of Court being more favourable than I expected, for so black a Fact laid to our Charge, I return’d in a grateful Acknowledgment, the Right Honourable the Lord-Mayor and Mr. Recorder, unfeigned Thanks for the same, and went strait to *Newgate*.

A Relation of the Cause of the Prosecution commenced against Mr. Richard Burridge, for Blasphemy.

WHEREAS Richard Burridge being arrested in an Action of 30*l.* in October, 1711. on a Bond extorted from me, for neither Value nor Goods receiv'd, by a rascally Printer, whom my Copies had rais'd from a Beggar's Brat to be a Livery-Man of the City of London; I went to the Gatehouse at Westminster with a full Resolution of never coming out again, till an Act for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors clear'd me from the Rigor of such an ungrateful Fellow.

Whilst I was there a Prisoner, one *John Christien Calleis*, a Debtor, being confin'd closely to a Room without a Chimney, in the greatest Depth of Winter, for asserting the Rights of his Fellow-Prisoners, he nevertheless found the Opportunity of sending Orders to one Captain *James Magrath*, a Debtor in the same Goal, to give me a Copy of some Memoirs written with his own Hand, and in that Gentleman's Custody, relating to the many villainous Practices committed by the Keeper on his Prisoners, with an earnest Request to correct, and have them printed: But the inhumane Jaylor and his barbarous Wife having some Knowledge thereof, they so far prevail'd upon my good Nature and easy Temper, by fair Words, as to inveigle the original Copy out of my Hands, whereby their notorious Deeds might be wholly stifl'd, and kept *Incognito* from the Eyes of the World.

But shortly after plainly seeing what foul Tricks this seemingly honest Man, *William Taylor*, the Keeper, every Day play'd behind the Hangings of specious Pretences, which was the way of making his gilt Copper often pass currently among foolish, ignorant People for Silver Coin, I could not bear his intolerable Insolence without many Times upbraiding him of his illegal Actions, which made him so odious, that nothing but Wonder and Shame can compose the Character of him, and his full as barbarous Wife. To pass by his most barbarous and inhumane Practices committed on one Mrs. *King*, whom he deny'd Christian Burial but in May 1711. and kept above Ground the

Space of 17 or 18 Days, insomuch that swarms of Worms and Maggots crawl'd about the Goal, to the great Nusance of those under Confinement, whilst Rats and other Vermin gnaw'd several Parts of the Corpse in a most terrible manner, as was told me by *John Christien Caleis*, Captain *James Magrath*, and Lieutenant *Stephen Gellot*, who had been Prisoners there some Time; besides several other irregular ill Doings, I shall take notice only of his base Demeanor whilst I was Prisoner in his Custody: As how he would permit and encourage such Prisoners (whether Debtors or Felons) who had Money to spend in the Tap-House, to strip both Men and Women stark-naked for Garnish, which is the Sum of 8*s.* 2*d.* demanded by some particular Prisoners of them newly committed by Writ or Warrant; and out of which *William Taylor* takes 1*s.* for Mops and Brooms, but never allows the Prisoners any to clean their Wards, and his Turnkey 4*d.* for half a Quartern of Brandy. The Keeper would allow them who demanded the Garnish, to pawn or sell those Prisoner's Cloaths who were not able to pay Garnish; beat them in a violent manner; burn them with red-hot Irons; pick their Pockets; and cheat them of their Box-Money. The Keeper makes the Prisoners pay 4*d.* per Mug for their Beer or Ale, which is shorther than a *Winchester-Quart* by half a Pint; and allows the Prisoners in their drunken Frolics to commit all manner of Wickedness, at the same Time keeping them Company himself till 1, 2, 3, or 4 in the Morning, with the greatest Complacency imaginable, provided they treat him; for Money is a scarce Commodity with him (as his Creditors say) at any Time. The Keeper makes such poor Prisoners, as will be so chouc'd, pay 1*4 d.* per Week for lying on the bare Boards, though he durst not demand that exorbitant Extortion before the Face of Justice; puts Prisoners on the Master-side into Common-side Charity, under the knavish Trick of giving them their Lodging *gratis*; and 3 good Rugs being sent by some charitably disposed Person in *March* last, to be given among such poor Prisoners that wanted them; he most inhumanly kept them to himself, when one *John Dasson*, arrested at the Suit of one *Mr. Burridge of Dorsetshire*, at the same Time was deny'd the Benefit of one to cover him, when he had in that cold Weather lain above 6 Weeks on the bare Floor. The Keeper sometimes locks the Debtors up in a close Room

14 or 15 Days together, when they are ready to expire for want of Air; and he permits his present Turnkey, the Son of a Jaylor that died miserably a Fleet-Prisoner, and now reduc'd to be a Vagabond, to be as Insolent as himself, in setting on the Felons to abuse the Debtors without a Cause; in not opening the Gate when People knocks, but when he pleases, insomuch that they go away again, to the great Detriment of those Prisoners whom they come to see; in not hanging out the Boxes without having a Debtor's Share, taking them in but thrice a Week, when they should be took in every Day; and sometimes hanging them out not at all, as particularly on *Thursday* the 3d of *April*, 1712. Again, this second-hand Knave (who endeavours to imitate his Master's Rascality as near as his Imperfections will permit him, for the Support of a finical Wife, whose Sauciness attempts to act Gently) thinks it not criminal to rob Prisoners of their Bread; and (with the Consent of *Taylor*) permits lewd Women to lie with Men that are Prisoners there all Night in the Goal, for Profit.

Now there being not a right Understanding (as I have afore hinted) betwixt Me and *Taylor*, because I (who was better born and bred than him) scorn'd to be of such a mean Spirit as to cringe, fawn, and flatter his intollerable Insolences; and fearing by my Pen I should throw him out of his Place, he incites one *John Saunders* to swear *Blasphemy* against me, who had been formerly his Turnkey, and attempted to cut my Throat with a Case-Knife, on *Friday* the 25th of *January*, 1711-12. being the Anniversary of St. *Paul's* Conversion; but violently beating him for this barbarous Action, he pretended that I and *Keele*, the rest of the Prisoners being lock'd up in their respective Apartments, had assaulted him with a Design to make an Escape; which Report evidently appear'd to the contrary, by my carrying up all the Keys of the Goal to *Taylor's* Wife, who return'd me many Thanks for the same, and treating me with a Pint of Brandy; she mightily exclaim'd against *Saunders*, as 'the very worst of Rogues. Next, another Person that indicted me at *Hicks's* Hall for *Blasphemy*, was one *George Howard*, alias *Rebecca Monk*, who was a Prisoner for Debt whilst I was in the *Gatehouse*. I took her at first for a Man, because she went always in Mens Apparel, and oftentimes shav'd me, for which I paid her;

her; but she was really a Woman, who having had a Bastard by a Captain, she after this Disgrace went in the aforesaid Habit by a Man's Name, and in the Quality of a Footman had waited on some Officers, both in *Spain* and *Flanders*. Afterwards being arrested in her right Name by an Adversary that very well knew what Sex she was of, as well as *Taylor*, by seeing *Rebecca Monk*'s Name in the Writ, she was nevertheless, through Favour or Interest, put into the Mens Ward; but her Sex, by some means or other being known to many of the Prisoners, the Keeper then put her into the Womens Ward, where she remain'd till her Discharge came in *January* last past. Then being at Liberty, and one Day riding behind a *Coach*, as having got a Foot-Woman's Place again, if I may so term Madam *Hic & hac*, Mr. *Keele* meeting her in the *Rules* of the *Fleet*, where he was then a Prisoner, he somewhat insulted her; whereupon to be reveng'd on him, she readily acquiesced to swear *Blasphemy* against him, withal making me a Sacrifice to her implacable Malice, because I was *Keele*'s Friend. Besides these two Persons (as I am very well inform'd) swore *Blasphemy* against *George Milson*; but yet they durst not appear against us at the Sessions-House in the *Old-Baily*, by reason *Saunders* was afraid of being arrested in Court by me for the Scandal which he had unjustly thrown on me, in case I had been acquitted on my Tryal; and *Rebecca Monk* was as timerous of my taking her up in Court for going in a Habit contrary to her Sex, which is severely punish'd by the Laws of this Land. Besides, *Taylor* had an Antipathy against *Keele* for going away in his Debt to the *Fleet*; and fear'd as much by me, when Mr. *Snowden* my Attorney came to me, about removing me also by a Writ of *Habeas Corpus* to the same Prison.

The Crime they alledged against me was done in the beginning and middle of *January*, 1711-12. but if *Taylor* and these Two Deponents were so conscientious as they pretended to be, it is an Admiration to me, why they did not indict me for it till *Wednesday* the 27th of *February* following, when the Law requires them to inform against me within Four Days after the Commission of such Fact. Also if I had been guilty of this Crime, I wonder they should not have been so kind as to make me sensible of my Error, by telling me of the Heinousness of it in a mild or harsh

harsh sort of a way; but instead thereof went and procur'd (after the Grand-Jury had found the Bill against me) a Warrant of the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice *Parker*, and which was brought to the *Gatehouse* by one of his Lordship's Tipstaffs, for the detaining me there, in case my Action of Debt should have been withdrawn, on Saturday the 1st of *March*, 1711-12. Next Day, and not till then, I was inform'd of the Accusation laid to my Charge, by a Letter written to me from the *Fleet-Prison* by Mr. *Keele*; then enquiring of *Taylor* the Meaning thereof, he told me that only *Richard Keele* and *George Milson* were indicted for *Blasphemy*; and that the Warrant lodg'd in his Hands by the Tipstaff of the Lord Chief Justice *Parker*, did not in the least touch me; thus through this Assurance he led me up in a lethargick Stupidity, that I might not prepare my self for my Tryal as I ought, till Tuesday the 1st of *April*, 1712. at which Time he shew'd me my Name also in his Lordship's Warrant.

Having Notice then of this heinous Information exhibited against me, I upbraided him with a Lie, which he excus'd by saying, he had over-hastily look'd the Warrant when he first read it; however, he bad me not be dissatisfied about it, for he would easily bring me off, by depositing in Court, that blasphemous Healths were propos'd to me, and drank by *Keele* and *Milson*, but were refused to be pledg'd by me. His present Turnkey also flatter'd me with the same Promise, which had been no more than true, if they had been as good as their Word, because such blasphemous Healths were never propos'd to me by *Keele* nor *Milson*, therefore I could not pledge them. But *Taylor*, instead of vindicating my Innocency, conspired all he could to brand me with a Crime of which I never was guilty; for when he understood how I intended to serve *John Saunders* and *Rebecca Monk*, he laid aside those Tools, and trump'd up Four others, namely, *John Legg*, *Brother-ton*, *Owen*, *Wait*, and *John Maybank*, to swear *Blasphemy* against me; and for fear they would not be enough to convict me upon the Queen's Cost of above 30 Pounds, he would have suborned one Madam *Charlotte Coleman* also to have sworn against me, who sometimes came to the *Gatehouse* to visit her Mother, there a Prisoner for Debt; but she being a Gentlewoman of more Honour and Sincerity, than to be byass'd by his Villany, she made no Appearance against

against me at the *Old-Baily*. Furthermore, *Owen Wait* that swore against me, and *Keele*, and *Milson*, declar'd the next Day after our Tryal, to *Milson's Sister-in-Law*, that he was frighted into what he had done against us by *Taylor*; and that because he would not swear so much as the other Witnesses, *Taylor* abus'd him, and would not pay him for the Day's Work which he had lost through his being obliged thereto by Virtue of a Writ of *Subpœna*; as he would be ready to depose before the Right Worshipful the Recorder, whenever required.

Now, when I found *William Taylor* (who has also the Faculty of keeping his Prisoners Declarations, without letting them see them; and so for Want thereof to put in their Pleas, they may be su'd to an Execntion, through Judgment by Default) was at the Bottom of all this Villany, I then began to consult what might be the Consequence of this Crime, by searching *Wingate's Statutes*, abridg'd from *Magna Charta* down to 1641. and continu'd by an anonymous Author till the Year 1679. but found nothing material to the Purpose; but a Statute made in the Reign of King *James the First*, which sets a Penalty of Ten Pounds on any Person, to be divided betwixt the King and the Prosecutor, that shall in any Show, Pageant, or May-game, prophanelly use the Name of God, or any of the Persons in the Holy Trinity; whereupon I thought the Cognizance of *Blasphemy* was rather within the Jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical or Canon Laws. However, having Knowledge of a later Statute, which spoke more to the Matter of *Blasphemy*, made in the 9th and 10th of *William the Third*, I was in Hopes of being within the Reach of it; but I miss'd of my Aim, and *Taylor* (who with his Wife scorn as much to go to Church, as to say their Prayers) had his Will in some measure, but not altogether as he would; wherefore I admonish him to abandon his Wickedness betimes, and take care of that Part of him which he regards least, or otherwise his luke-warm Soul will be so nauseous unto God, that he must at last spue him out into the bottomless Pit.

The Abjuration and Recantation of Mr. Richard Burridge, made to Mr. Lorrain, Ordinary of Newgate, in the Chappel there, on Sunday, July the Sixth, 1712.

I Had the Happiness to be carefully bred up from my Infancy in the Principles of the *Church of England*, attended with the Advantage of a liberal Education, till through the Instigation of some Jesuits, by my going (contrary to my Parents Will) to the Seminary erected in the *Savoy* by King *James the Second*, I was inticed by manifold Promises of future Honour and Preferment, to Abjure, Recant, and Apostatize, about the 17th Year of my Age, from the Religion in which I was educated, and to enter into the Pale of the *Romish Church*; when at the same Time my Conscience told me, their dry Bits in the Lord's Supper, their solitary Communions without Communicants, their painted Flames of Purgatory, their feign'd Miracles, auricular Confessions, often bowing to I know not what, praying to the Virgin *Mary*, Saints or Angels, babling for the Dead, and their strange converting the Elements of Bread and Wine into the real Substance of Flesh and Blood, by the Art of *Transubstantiation*, were only pious Frauds, to which the Ingenuity of learned Men give no Credit. Cardinal *Caraffa* was sensible of the Errors indulged by the Papal See; for when he was making his Entrance through *Paris*, in the Quality of Legate from the Pope, and the People flocking about him to be bless'd, making Crosses with his Fingers, instead of laying his Hands on their Heads, according to the usual Form of Episcopal Benediction, he blessed the honest vulgar *Frenchmen* in these words, *Quandoquidem iste populus vult decipi, decipiatur*; thereby meaning, that if they would be gull'd or deceiv'd, by such Shews and Fopperies, let them be deceived.

Being thus unhappily fallen, and turn'd Apostate, when (with Confusion and Shame do I speak it) God had thought nothing either on Earth or in Heaven too good for me, I did not yet altogether confide in the Salvability of the *Romish Belief*, but grudging my Creator that weak and worthless

worthless Obedience which his infinite Majesty required of me, I have examined the Opinions of all Schisms, Sects, and Heresies, to see which gave the greatest Scope for following a most wicked and licentious Course of Life; for indulging my Pleasures, I thought, if I had not leave every Day to take my full Carreer therein, my Soul was bereav'd of its *Christian Liberty*; as if (poor Sinner as I am!) I had no other way left me of imitating the blessed Saviour of Mankind, but by often descending into Hell. However, finding the *Church of Rome* gave the greatest Authority to its Believers, for casting themselves quite out of the Almighty's Protection, according to these Words of the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, which point particularly to the *Church of Rome*, *God shall send them strong Delusions, that they should believe a Lie: That they all might be damn'd, who believ'd not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness*, I was resolved with a *Nemine Contradicente* to be fashionably Prophane with the greatest Sinners; especially in these Days, when most strange Whim-sies and Fancies of Dotage possess the World, beyond the Examples of all former Times: In these Days (I say again) when every Man thinks what he lists, and speaks what he thinks, and writes what he speaks, and prints what he writes; neither would the World talk so much, did it not make account it cannot talk long. What should we do then, since we know the World truly old, and now going upon its great, and fatal Climacterick; but as discreet Men would carry themselves to impotent and decrepit Age, I'll bear with the Infirmitie's of it, pity and bewail the Distemper, strive against the Enormities, and prepare for the Dissolution.

Alas! had I been of this Mind sooner, I should not have been so long an *Atheist*; nay, the very greatest of *Atheists*; for whereas others were frighten'd at the terrible Meteors of Thunder and Lightning, it was my Delight always to hear and see it, as knowing by the reading of *Physicks* or *Natural Philosophy*, that such Effects proceeded only from Natural Causes. Besides, that which hath also strengthened me in the atheistical Notions, was the several Rents and Divisions which I have seen made in the establish'd Church of this Land; for how many Opinions have I seen broached every Day, that argu'd no less than a Spiritual Madness? Nay, such as if they should have been

mentioned at the first Foundation of *Christianity*, the Primitive *Christians* would have question'd out of what *Bedlam* they had broken loose. Now the Sins committed by me, are more culpable than those committed by vulgar, illiterate Men, for where *much is given, much is required*; and St. *Augustin's* Saying comes very often into my Mind, *Indocti rapiunt, & ascendunt Cælum, dum nos cum doctrina nostra in Gehennam detrudimur*; which I thus interpret, *The poor, illiterate World climb and go into Heaven, whilst we, with all our Learning, are cast headlong into Hell*. Alas! the *Dog*, when he is Stomach-sick, can go right to his proper *Grass*; the *Cat* to her *Nep*; the *Goat* to his *Hemlock*; the *Weasel* to *Rice*; the *Hart* to *Dittany*; but now I am mortally Soul-sick, and naturally knows no Remedy for my Distemper; oh! thou that art the great *Physician* in Heaven, first cure my Insensibleness; make thou me as sick of my Sins, as I have made my self sick by Sin, and then speak the Word, and I shall be Whole again.

To my great Scandal may I own my self one of *David's* Fools, who *hath said in his Heart there is no God*; and I would be as morose to any pious Man that would exhort me to be mindful of my latter End, as the churlish *Cynick* to *Alexander the Great*; because supposing no Rewards nor Punishments would befall Mankind after Death, I thought I might at any Time sing, *Nunc dimittis* with as much Cheerfulness as old *Simeon*, when, after long waiting for the Consolation of *Israel*, he had seen the *Lord's Christ*. Truly, Heaven hath many Tongues that talk of it, and more Eyes to behold it, but few Hearts that rightly affect it; for *Atheism* among the Learned, not Ignorant, is mounted on the *Zenith* of this Kingdom; it is so predominant and epidemical among wiser Heads, that was it not for the sake of the few Godly here dwelling, the Eate of the Ten Tribes and a half, which *Salmanazar* carried Captive into *Affyria* would be our Portion, whose Settlement we know not now, unless they be the wild *Tartars*, whose Name may properly be derived from *Totares*, or *Tatares*, which in the *Syriack Tongue* signifies a *Remnant*. Oh! then that I could but be humble, and *work out my Salvation with Fear and Trembling*.

and a man of the world, who have no regard to the
need of a physician, and is as dead as a log. Barnabas **Nature**,
and a man of the world, who have no regard to the
need of a physician, and is as dead as a log. Barnabas **Nature**,

Nature, which is but the *Instrument of God*, I have made my Deity ; all the stupendious Operations of Providence I have attributed to *Chance* ; and, with the *Stoick*, impute the Calamities which attend Mankind, to *Fate* and *Necessity*. When I reflect on my Folly, I cannot but with Horror and Amaze think on the eternal Wrath I escaped, when not long since I most impiously attempted, with another Gentleman, to give my Soul in a Bravado to the Devil, by resigning it up to him on a Bond written and sign'd with my own Blood ; but his not coming to accept it on the Condition I made it, it induc'd me then to believe there was no Devil at all. But now, though to my Knowledge, many Youths have known some grey Heads that have continu'd vigorous, till they have liv'd to match them in the Colour of their Livery ; yet, as Contingencies of Nature often happen, I think it high Time for me now to put my self into a constant Expectation of the End of all Things ; whereby I may set my self in a meet Posture for the Reception of our returning Saviour. Indeed I am heartily sorry that ever I was intoxicated with infernal Vanities, which led me not only to imbrace papistick Trifles, but also to assert atheistical Notions ; therefore, I reckon *Popery* and *Atheism* to be Co-relatives ; and, if a down-right *Atheist* and thorough-pac'd *Papist* are not synonimous, yet are they at least convertible Terms.

I never would take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy to King *William* ; yet not as I ever disputed whether he was a Prince *de jure divino*, or *de facto*, but because, had I then been a most zealous *Protestant*, I should have been a most zealous *Jacobite* : However, had Queen *Mary* surviv'd her Royal Consort, I should have espous'd her Cause before the *Pretender's* ; for tho' I affected his reputed Father, yet I could never persuade my self that the *Chevalier de St. George* was the legitimate Offspring of the Royal Family. Again, no sooner did the irreversible Decrees of Fate translate King *William* from the Stage of this mortal Life into a State of Immortality, which Change made room for my present Sovereign's happy Accession to the Throne ; but yet an unshaken'd Loyalty inspir'd me to pay her true Obedience, not only for Favours which I have had the Honour to receive from her, both when she was Princess of *Denmark*, and since her being invested with Imperial Majesty, but also for her being the indubitable Heiress

to these Kingdoms by Hereditary Right, as well as by a Parliamentary Assent, which is the strongest Power with Succession that can be given any Monarch for wielding the *British* Sceptre. I have often been persuaded in the Beginning of this auspicious Reign, which God grant long to continue, to go over to St. Omers, to be enter'd into the Order of the *Society of Jesus*, but being a Nullifidian I utterly abhor'd any Thing of Religion, in laughing at such as would tell me there was any other Heaven than that of my own creating ; any other Happiness besides my Pleasures ; or an Hell diverse from that which *Christianity* has objected to the Cowards Fancy. Nay, when sometimes a *Minister* hath gently reprov'd me for my daring Wickedness, with all the moving Passions of *Rhetorick* that could be, I have with the deepest Accent of Scorn and Disdain call'd him a paltry Parson, and stuck not out to tell him to his Face, that he would do well to keep him to his Tub, and tell a precise Tale once or twice a Week to his ignorant Auditors, and forbear to read Lectures of Godliness to me, who brought more Learning from School with me, than all the canonical Cassocks and Girdles in the Nation, with all their tough logical Notions, and knotty *Metaphysicks*, could be able to contain. But now, if God, the Infinite-ness of whose Majesty cannot be better express'd than in the *Doxology*, which concludes the best of Prayers, will be graciously pleas'd to take up his Lodging in my vile Body, O ! then make way for thy self by the strong Motions of thy blessed Spirit, into the in-most Rooms of my Heart, and incline me powerfully to my own Happiness, or else thou shalt be ever excluded, and I shall be ever miserable. It is a common Adage, *That we ought to give the Devil his Due* ; but surely it is possible for us to wrong that malignant Spirit, in casting upon him those Evils which are not properly his ; as particularly for my own Part, I have express'd so great Charity to the Devil, that fearing the Tempter should have too great a Load of other Mens Sins upon him, at the last and great Day of Accompts, I have freely, out of my own innate Humour, exempted him from putting an Helping-hand to some of my Sins, by openly professing I was able to go far enough out of the Way to Heaven without a Seducer ; and likewise, because in a presumptuous Rashness I would scorn to owe my Damnation to any but my self. Therefore as I am such a harden'd

Sinner, is there any Possibility for my turning to the Lord? May I yet find Salvation? Can I be good in spite of all infernal Combinations? Alas! Why not? St. Paul's Conversion was extraordinary and miraculous; and it is my Opinion, that in some Degree it must be thus with every Soul; I must be struck down first, to be made sensible of my spiritual Blindness, e'er my Restauration to Grace can be accomplish'd.

How unjustly hath the Presumption of blasphemous Cavaliers been wont to cast the Envy of their Condemnation merely upon the absolute Will of an unrespective Power, as if the Damnation of the Creature was only of a supreme Will, not of a just Merit; the very Name of Justice convinces them; a punitive Justice cannot but suppose an Offence. It is not for me to wrack the Brains of plain, simple *Christians* with the Subtilties of Distinctions, of a negative and positive Reprobation, of Causes and Consequences, Disputations meet for the Schools; it is enough that all *Protestant* Divines agree in this Point of *Divinity*, that never Man is, was, or can be miserable, but for Sin, yea, for his own Sin. Truly, *Blasphemy* is a most execrable Sin; and though when I read the Scriptures formerly it was only to ridicule them, yet now I never reflect on that wicked Woman's blasphemous Advice to her afflicted Husband, *Curse God and die*, but I tremble at the impious Expression. However, I now stand convicted of this horrible Crime of *Blasphemy*, and having suffer'd a temporal Punishment for it, it behoves me to see what is the Punishment thereof in the World to come. *Blasphemy* (if I may belieye the Word of a Deity) merits eternal Damnation, according to our Saviour's Saying, in St. Matthew's Gospel, *I say unto you, all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven unto Men: But the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto Men*. As for the first Part of this Text, which only touches the ill, scandalous, or scurrilous Report, which one Man may raise on another, I shall not trouble my self about it, because it is pardonable; but the other Part hath put my Conscience to some Pain, till I found some Mitigation thereof by certain Expositors on the *New Testament*. For *Bulinger* on this Place says, *Est Spiritus Blasphemia, ubi Hominis Audacia in contumeliam Divini Nominis data Opera profilit*; of which Audaciousnes I have not yet been guilty. And *Calvin* thus writes,

writes, *Ex his autem omnibus colligere jam licet, in Spiritum Sanctum peccare & Blasphemos esse qui Dei Virtutes sibi per Spiritum patefactus, in quibus celebrari ejus Gloriam decebat, in ejus Dedecus malitiosè convertunt, & cum Satana duce suo Professi sunt Gloriae Dei hostes*; but in this Respect I never proclaim'd my self an Enemy to God, but in an atheistical Way, which also denies the Being of a Devil; and therefore, though I have Authors for the Purpose, I declin'd the Study of *Magick*. I shall not go about to make any critical Remarks on the word *Blasphemy*, according to the several Versions of *Tremellius, Beza, Pagnine*, the vulgar *Latin*, original *Greek*, the interlineary Version of *Arias Montanus*, or *English Translation*, but shall take Notice of the Danger of *Blasphemy*, spoken of again by *Christ* in St. *Mark's Gospel*: *All Sins shall be forgiven unto the Sons of Men, and Blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never Forgiveness, but is in Danger of eternal Damnation*. So much Notice do I take of this Crime, that if it is so heinous in the Sight of God, the *Levitical Laws* could not be too severe in enacting, *He that blasphemeth the Name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to Death, and all the Congregation shall certainly stone him: As well the Stranger as he that is born in the Land, when he blasphemeth the Name of the Lord, shall be put to death*. The Force of which Law was put in Execution on the Son of *Shelomith*, an *Israelitish Woman*, for blaspheming the Name of the Lord, as he was striving with a Man of *Israel* in the Camp. Now the Lenity of humane Laws, since the Promulgation of the *Gospel* hath made the temporal Punishment of this Sin more easy; and according to such Laws it seems that *Blasphemy* must be a Crime different from *Presumption* and *Despair*, which Two Sins I am positive can never be forgiven at the great Tribunal: But if *Presumption* and *Despair* are not Sins against the *Holy Ghost*, why then St. *Paul* in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* explains what it is, when he tells them, *It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come; if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto Repentance: Seeing they crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open Shame*: Thus, if *Aposta-*

cy is the Sin against the Holy Ghost, I have for certain apostatiz'd from the truly Catholick and Apostolick Church, and fear I come into the Class of them whom St. John the Divine seems to forbid praying, when he says, *If any Man see his Brother sin a Sin which is not unto Death, he shall ask, and he shall give him Life for them that sin not unto Death.* There is a Sin unto Death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. Now, this Sin unto Death, *Calvin* expounds to be *Apostacy*; his Words are, *Atqui ex contextu facile colligi potest, non esse partialem (ut vocant) lapsum, nec Precepti unius Transgressionem, sed Apostasiam, qua penitus Homines à Deo se alienant.* Thus, without doubt, when any Man doth apostatize, he may be guilty of blaspheming his God; for *Blasphemy*, by the aforesaid Exposition, is accounted a Defection from the *Christian Faith*, as establish'd by *Christ* and his Apostles; his Words are, *Porro quum Peccatum aut Blasphemia in Spiritum ejusmodi Defectionem perpetuo secum trahat, non dubium est, quin hic etiam notetur.* Alas! then, if *Blasphemy* is the Effect of *Apostacy*, and comprehended under the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, my Folly hath made both my Body and Soul a Sacrifice to eternal Damnation. Ah! Lord, what Struggling have I with my weak Fears? How do I anticipate my Evils by Distrust? What shall I do when I am old? How shall I be able to endure Pain? How shall I pass through the horrid Gates of Death? Oh, my God, where is my Faith, that I am thus surpriz'd? Mauvre all the Machinations of Hell! I will with a *Christian* Courage out-brave the Terror of Despair (but yet not presume too absolutely on God's Mercies) when *Calvin* again says, *Nulum enim est tam atroc, aut tam Nefandum, aut tam inauditum Peccatum, quod per Fidem in Iesum Christum non remittatur. Ipse enim propitiatio & Pretium pro Peccatis nostris, non pro nostris autem tantum, sed etiam pro totius Mundi.* Besides, not dreading that Sort of *Blasphemy* committed against Men, by opprobriously approaching and reviling them, and therefore render'd *Convitium* in the vulgar *Latin*, to distinguish it from the word *Blasphemia*, which in the general Acceptation of holy Writers is only appropriated to the down-right Cursing and most impiously and prophanely speaking against that Omnipotent God, *in whom* (as St. Paul from *Aratus* tells us) *we live, and move, and have our Being*: Neither can I believe this last Sort of

Blasphemy reckon'd unpardonable in the World to come, is now to be committed ; seeing that this Expression of our Lord and Saviour was expressly spoken to those *Jews*, who were only guilty of this horrid and unpardonable *Blasphemy*, in not believing the Doctrine, holy Life and Miracles, which was preach'd and shew'd them by the Son of God in his own Person ; and then for his Kindness of leading them to endless Happiness, to be so barbarous, cruel and inhumane, as to dispitefully use, scourge, mock and crucify the Redeemer of the World, most ignominiously, betwixt Two Malefactors, such Actions (I think) might be blasphemous. This might be *Blasphemy* in the highest Degree, to affront God to his Face, in his very Person, when he came to retrieve them from the very Brink of inevitable Destruction ; wherefore, most merciful Father ! grant I may have the Assurance of so strong an Helper as thy beloved Son, who commands all the Powers of Heaven, Earth, and Hell ; alas ! if he be on my Side, what a Shame is it for me to give so much Way to my wretched Infidelity, as to punish my self with Expectation of future Evils ? When henceforwards I'll endeavour to make an absolute Combination of all Virtues a Paraphrase on all my daily Actions.

However, let *Blasphemy* be ever so much unpardonable in the World to come, I solemnly profess here, before the Sight of God and Man, in this holy Assembly, that I never spoke those blasphemous Words, of which I was convicted lately before the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice *Parker*, the Right Honourable Sir *Robert Beachcroft*, Knight, Lord Mayor of *London*, and Right Worshipful Sir *Peter King*, Knight, Recorder of the same City ; from whose Sentence of remaining a Year in Prison, justly inflicted on me, according to the Depositions of the false Witnesses, which forswore themselves, I expect no Release, unless Her most sacred Majesty will be graciously pleas'd to let so much Royal Pity and Compassion flow from the inexhaustible Fountain of Her unparallell'd Clemency, as to put a speedy End to my Confinement, by mingling Mercy with the Severity of Justice ; which unmerited Favour I shall turn to so good an Use, that it shall be my Pride to make an absolute Conquest over all the reigning Vices of the Age. And now again, I do not only renounce all atheistical Tenets, which I have too long inbib'd, to exclude my self from being a Favourite in the Court of Heaven ;

ven ; but from the very Bottom of my Heart I unfeignedly recant and abjure, in the Presence of this holy Congregation, all the Errors and Belief of the Church of *Rome*, as most heretical and damnable ; and although I have received the Sacrament after the *Romish* manner to my eternal Damnation, in case I ever deserted their Faith, yet, as a bad Oath is better broke than kept, I once more, by an Act of Choice, as well as Judgment, return into the Bosom of the *Church of England*, whereby I may assuredly call God my Father, *Christ Jesus* my Brother, and our establish'd Church, my Mother, to my Life's End.

Alas ! with the prodigal Son, I will return Home to my Father's House, and never dwell again in the Tents of Wickedness ; as knowing, such that long to inhabit among Strangers, will not be backwards in embracing strange Religions ; both proceeding from one and the same dangerous Principle, an Unconstancy of Mind, and a Desire of Novelty. Henceforwards my Study shall be my chief Place of Recreation ; my Books shall be my chief Companions ; and I shall not only be too much in Love with *Scripture*, to see her (as I have too often) prostituted to every licentious Fancy, and by an impudent Wrestling made the Subject of every atheistical Wit ; but also strive to be such a profitable Member of the Common-wealth, that I'll do my utmost Endeavour, that every one that hears me talk, shall by what they hear, either gain a Virtue, or lose a Vice. I here recant and abjure all my Errors in general, not out of Ostentation, Interest, or any Sinister End whatever, but with all Humility and Sincerity ; for Hypocrisy I abhor, and I judge of all Dissimulation, as in it self it is ; for, though in Compliment, the Practice of it may seem princely, yet in its own Nature I know 'tis devilish, and in the End will prove damnable. I scorn to be *Satan's* Scholar, though for so profitable a Lesson : For it was he indeed was the first Master of this Ceremony ; when he complimented our first Parents out of their *Innocence* and *Paradise* at once ; by tickling their Ambition with this Strain, *Ye shall be like Gods*. Whatsoever Talent God hath been pleas'd to endue me with, I shall not dig in the Earth to hide it, but so traffick with it, till Art and Industry have brought it an Increase some way proportionable to the Stock of Nature : At least, to that Degree which may intitle me to the *Euge* of my Lord, and the glorious Welcom of a good and faithful Servant.

Having now abjur'd and recanted *Atheism* and *Papism*, my Ambition makes me desire in all Things to be above the World; and to this End I shall for ever set my Affections on Things above, and point them out to Heaven. A Pursuit after Godliness will make my Bosom my Treasury, and that so rich and self-sufficient, that all the external Felicities this World has or can cast into the Bargain, will be look'd upon by me with as slender a Regard, as the Widow's Mite would have been by the great Lord of the Temple, without a large Augmentation for her Piety and Devotion. Whilst I was a profess'd *Atheist*, I was nevertheless possess'd of that charitable Temper which would relieve People in Distress; this was all I was good for, and God grant I may still admire Charity, when by giving to the Poor, I lend to the Lord; the Honour of being the Lord's Creditor is all the Interest I expect; and doubtless this Happiness is not every Man's, to have God his Debtor. I durst now be Religious in spite of the World; and therefore set my self, without betraying the least Timidity, against the great Bugbear, which so scares most Men, not only out of their Wits, but out of all good Actions, Shame, or Derision. These are they which, as the Elephants in King Pyrrhus's Army terrified the *Romans* with their prodigious Bulk, do so affright the greatest Part of vicious Men, that they never leave flying till they tumble into the bottomless Pit together. But my Conversion (I hope) will make me, like the stout *Minucius*, prove by Experience these Monsters to be of more Bulk than Metal, and to want nothing but an Adversary to bring them into Subjection. As I have an Honour, which is my Religion; and a Mistress too to vindicate and defend from all Injuries and Affronts, which is my own Soul, for the Sakes of these Two, having listed my self again under the Banners of *Christ*, I shall be oblig'd to be engag'd in many a Duel, with those Heresies and those Sins, which would strain and corrupt the one, or steal away and deflower the other. Again, I acknowledge I sincerely enter my self within the Pale of the *Church of England*, whose Doctrine I own to be Orthodox, and subscribe to the 39 Articles thereof as true. My Fidelity thereto shall be prov'd by receiving, after a due Preparation for so great a Work, because, *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself*, the blessed *Eucharist*, or Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,

Supper. Being assur'd in my own Conscience of the Truth of our establish'd Church, I durst venture on it the Salvation of my Soul, in spite of the greatest *Anathema* by the Pope himself, a *Spaniſh Inquisition*, or the most sanguinary Prosecutions of *Romish Fury*. I am heartily sorry that I have so long been so blindly Zealous, as to worship a golden Calf for a God ; but now my Eyes are open'd, and I see my Errors ; I look upon my present Afflictions as Corrections, blaming my self for the Occasion, but at the same Time blesſing God for bringing me to a due Sense of my manifold Sins by such Tryals. Truly, like a natural and hopeful Child, I seriously consider my own Faults, which provoked my heavenly Father thus to chastise me ; and so by stroaking the Hand, and kissing the Rod, and humbly begging Pardon for my Offences, I may set my Father's Affections, which before I had turn'd aside, not lost, into their own proper Chanel again. Now lest my Reader should think my Confession too prolix, I shall conclude with these Words spoken by our blessed Saviour : *I say unto you, that likewise Joy shall be in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteſt, more than over ninety and nine just Persons, which need no Repentance. There is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God, over one Sinner that repenteſt.*

RELIGIO LIBERTINI.

RELIGION is an indispensable Duty which the very Light of Nature directs all Rational Creatures to observe, by paying Adoration to that Supream Power in whom we live, and move, and have our Being. So as there is but one God, only one Church is required upon Earth ; for as Reason is the golden Foundation laid for us Mortals to build upon, God expects we should not so much abuse it, as to erect thereupon any meaner Structure than an Heaven. But considering we live now so much in the Evening of the World, when the thick and foggy Mists of Ignorance darken, or rather Mankind conspires to commence, and take Degrees in false Opinions, and that fading Light we have, is so variously refracted by most unaccountable Errors, and so often reflected by the disfigured

Glasses

Glasses of Humour and Fancy, we may truly say we have as many Religions in this Nation as Men. Never was the sacred Name of Religion more abus'd than it is now; and indeed it is to be fear'd, that having been so long misapplied to every false Doctrine, it will at last find the like hard Measure, with those once more honest Names of Tyrant and Sophister; and from a Title of the highest Honour, degenerate into a Term of the greatest Disgrace and Infamy.

The seamless Garment of our Saviour typically signify'd there was but one Way of Veneration; but to be sure of the right Way, I have proved all Things, and am resolved to stick to that which is best. My Sureties Promise of that I knew nothing of at the Font, ties no Obligation to my Belief; nor shall an *Ipse Dixit* direct my *Credo*, for Authority being an Humour unhappily possessing many Men, it hath by Prejudice withdrawn them into Parties, and contemning the Sovereignty of Truth, seditionally abetted the private Divisions of Error. Again, I am not so bigotted as to allow any Prostration to Antiquity for my Belief without Probation of the Truth, hereby imposing a Thraldom on our Times, which the Ingenuity of no Age should endure, or indeed the Presumption of any did ever yet enjoin; moreover, although I was carefully educated in the *Protestant* Religion, by my ever honoured Parents, the Happiness of whose Conversation I enjoy'd three Septenaries of Years, yet the Force of Education could not prevent my Dissertation from those Principles which I suck'd in from meer Infancy; but finding no Satisfaction in any, like the prodigal Son I return'd Home to my Father's House, and enter'd into the Pale of the *Church of England* again. However, I never conform'd to it upon the Account of swearing Allegiance to Custom, nor because it is the Religion in Fashion, or rather established here; but because Reason induced me to believe her Doctrine to be the purest on Earth, and most consonant to that which was imbraced by the Primitive *Christians*: But through the Malignity of the Times I am afraid we shall never see Primitive *Christianity* revive in its full Strength and Vigour more. To Reason (I say) I submit my Conscience; I think she cannot well be subdu'd by Errors; for being Sovereign of the Passions, though her Lenity or Supineness doth sometimes both occasion and per-

mit their Usurpations, yet is she seldom so divested of her Native Power, but that whensoever she pleases to employ what she hath left, she is able to resume what she hath lost. Our Adversaries may cavil, and say the Tenets of the Church of *England* are erroneous; but if they be grounded on Errors, they are such Errors which *Christ* himself taught us; such Errors which his Apostles promulgated over the World; such Errors which dying Martyrs seal'd with their Blood; such Errors which both *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers authoriz'd; such Errors which are confirm'd by wholsom Laws; and such Errors which all Orthodox Divines maintain in this Age, surpassing for Knowledge that wherein the *Greek* and *Roman* Learning bore the Sway. I allow, we are not so infallible now, as we might have been, if our first Parents had retain'd their Integrity; however, as by that unhappy Lapse our Understandings are eclipsed, as well as our Tempers infirmed, we must betake our selves to Ways of Reparation, and depend upon the Illumination of our Endeavours; for thus may we in some Measure repair our Primary Ruins, and build our selves Men again.

To the Dishonour (must I speak it) of our Predecessors, and the Disparagement of those that glory in the Antiquity of their Ancestors, we imbraced Heathenism a long while in this Island; the Nativity of the *Christian* Faith scarce reaches the Æra of a Thousand Years; and that glimpse of *Christianity* given us by *Austin* the Monk was so much corrupted with the *pia fraudes* of the Church of *Rome*, that it was some Ages before the careful Endeavours of After-times could restore it to its former Purity. Since the Reformation it is purified from the superstitious Dross of *Romish Idolatry*, from which (although I was betrothed to my present Wife in that Communion) *Libra me Domine* is my sincere Litany; and now utterly abhorring Popery, it is my hearty Wish, the Protestant Hands of *Great-Britain* may join like the Cherubims flaming Sword, to keep the Pope for ever out of this once Hereditary *Paradise*, which he by his Apostacy hath justly forfeited and lost. The Protestant Religion I choose for its Truth, not its Comeliness; and often weigh each Branch of it in the Balance of the Sanctuary, that I may be sure it is full Weight. This is the Religion that is most deserving of the *Christian's* Imbraces; this is the Religion which has Majesty enough to daunt

Nebuchadnezzar with the hottest Furnace in his Mouth; and a holy Zeal which (as the brighter Sun-Beams do upon the fainter Light of a Candle) can prey upon and consume to nothing the most scorching Flames of Persecution. For the Profession of this Religion the Spirits of holy Martyrs could not be silenc'd; who being exposed not only to the Eyes, but the merciless Teeth of Wolves, gave loud Expressions of their Faith, and their holy Clamours were heard as high as Heaven! I cannot tell how strong my Faith might be in courting Racks, hugging Flames, imbracing Gibbets, kissing Daggers, or complimenting Lions, in Vindication of my Religion; but my Mind gives me, I should sooner suffer for the *Church of England*, than for any Church upon Earth: Nay, I am sure I should be firmer to my Principles in that Case, than *Peter*, when in spite of all his empty Boasts, wherein he not only seem'd to defy Death, but *Christ's* Prediction too, he did not only forsake his Master, but deny'd him to the last. All other Opinions are repugnant to the Determinations of Truth, Sense, and Reason; an *Aiunt* or *Fortasse* shall not make me swim against the Stream of those strong Currents, which take their Rise from the holy Scripture, which is indited by the Holy Ghost; and therefore *Julian the Apostate*, *Maximinus*, and *Dioclesian* attempted the Ruin and total Destruction thereof: But the Longevity of that sacred Piece, which hath so long escaped the common Fate, and the Providence of that Spirit which is ever awake over it, may at last discourage such rash Attempts; and if not, make doubtful its Mortality, at least indubitably declare, this is a Stone too big for *Saturn's* Mouth, and a Bit indeed *Oblivion* cannot swallow. I hold with the *Romanists* in the Point of not permitting the Scripture to be translated into vulgar Tongues, whereby every illiterate Fellow shall pretend to be an Interpreter of the *Oracles of God*; it is too fatally manifest that from this ground in the Lecture of Holy Scripture, their Apprehensions are commonly confined unto the literal Sense of the Text, from whence have ensu'd the gross and duller sorts of Heresies: For not attaining the Deuteroscopy, and second Intention of the Words, they are fain to omit their Superconsequences, Coherences, Figures, or Tropologies, and are not sometime perswaded by Fire beyond their Literalities. The Writings of the inspired Penmen are only proper

proper to be read by the Commonwealth of Letters, to which my Veneration is such, that I must needs acknowledge, tho' Arms or Descent hath carried away the Kingdom, yet Learning hath carried the Priesthood; which is, and ever hath been, in some Competition with Empire.

It must be allow'd that the Scripture is the only Guide to Salvation; nevertheless, I have not such an Antipathy against Pagan Writers, as that Pope who conspired the Subversion of all Heathen Authors; for from their Writings may be learnt many a good Lesson of Morality. 'Tis true, *Horace*, *Juvenal*, and *Perfus* were no Prophets; nevertheless, their Pens did seem to indigitate and point at the Vices of our Times. Nay, the great Apostle of the *Gentiles* was not ashamed to use the Authority of the *Ethnick* Writers in his Divine Epistles. Besides, the most learned Heathens went a gleaning in the abundant Fields of *Rabbinical* Learning; for where had *Ovid* his Story of *Deucalion's* Deluge, his *Gigantomachia*, and Sacrifice of *Iphigenia*, but from *Noah's* Flood, the Confusion of *Babel*, and *Jeptah's* Rash Vow? *Lucan* his Cognition of the Dissolution of the World by Fire, but from the New Testament? *Virgil* that Prediction of our Saviour, *Chara Deum soboles*, and so forth; but from the inspired Prophecies of the *Sybils*? *Hesiod* his Intelligence of *Adam's* Exclusion from *Paradise*, but from the *Pentateuch* of *Moses*? *Herodotus* his Account of the Angel's slaying 185000 Men in *Senacharib's* Army, but from Divine Glory? Or *Plato* such Divine Sayings, which incited a great Father of the Church to confer this *Eulogium* on him, *Si paganus christiane scriptit, si christianus paganice scriptit*, but from conversing also with the *Hagiography* of the holy Prophets? Indeed, Ignorance owes its Nativity as much to the Vulgars reviling Humane Learning, as to any one Thing else. The Comick's Saying, *Quot homines, tot sententiae*, is not only verify'd, but even grants an *Imprimatur* to many chymrical Whimsies. The Objection that may be made against the Use of Heathen Authors, may be their Infidelity; why I pity their Misfortune of believing a Deity in the Work of their own Hands; for although in this antient and diffused Adoration of Idols, unto Priests and subtler Heads, the Worship perhaps might be Symbolical; and as their Images related some way to their Deities, yet is

the Idolatry direct and down-right in the People, whose Credulity is illimitable, who may be made to believe that any Thing is God, or that there is no God at all. However, I have great Hopes of their Salvability, though the Right Reverend Dr. *Williams*, late Bishop of *Chichester*, in a Disputation held with me, is much against it. I cannot approve that Doctrine, whose uncharitable Censure assumes the Prerogative of dooming so many Millions of Souls to the uttermost Severity of Divine Wrath. Surely *Statius*'s asserting the Certainty of a Deity in a blind Way, may find a much more Mitigation of Punishment for his Ignorance, than atheistical *Lucretius*, who believed all Things came by Nature, which is but the Instrument of God. *Cicero*'s small Knowledge too of a Godhead without doubt may be better rewarded in a future State, than *Lucian*'s impiously scoffing at religious Principles. And *Seneca*'s Morals must infallibly exalt him in the World to come above *Catullus*, for wantonly writing to his beloved *Lesbia*. Was the want of the Gospel shining among the Infidels to be the Cause of their Damnation, in pity to their miserable Condition, I could wish that learned Father's Opinion true, whose charitable Disposition urg'd him to imagin, *The very Devils should find Absolution after a limited Time of Punishment*. Certainly it must be a terrible Thing to be for ever excluded the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of Bliss; and the Tenet must be exploded as an Affront to Divine Mercy, when *Christ is not a Propitiation for our Sins only, but for the Sins of the whole World*.

I must ingeniously confess (but blushing with Shame and Confusion at my Audaciousness) that out of an ostentatious way of displaying the Trophies of Wit, and Gaiety of Learning, I have atheistically denied the Essence of a Divine Being; which verify'd what *Festus* said of *Paul*, when in Bonds, *Too much Learning hath made thee mad*. Truly, the Contagion of Atheism is too epidemical among us still; nor can the Man be any better than *David*'s Fool, who will contradict the Being of a Deity, when the Interchange of Nights and Days, the orderly Motion of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and very Light of Nature, manifest the Certainty of a suprem Power to be *in esse*. Nothing so sure as that there is a God, but what he is I will not presume to define. It is a Task of too great difficulty for Man perfectly to explicate that incomprehensible Being,

Being, whose Center is every where, and Circumference no where. This is a sublime Theme on which it is easy to speak much, but impossible to say enough: 'Tis Silence best expresses our Wonder, and a prostrate Veneration is the fassest Apprehension of that Spirit which cannot be comprehended. His Ubiquity is admirable, in excluding all Wishes of Removal, by making his Essence incapable of Exclusion; for, whither should he desire to transport himself that is every where, and can wish himself to be in no Place where he is not already? Such is his Power, that nothing is impossible to God but Lying, and that Assertion in *Metaphysicks*, God cannot command those Things to be undone, which have been done. By the advantageous Idea's I have entertain'd of God's Perfections, I have been sometimes inclin'd to think, that the Reason why he tells *Moses*, he cannot see his Face without dying, might be, that as transcendent Objects destroy the Sense, so lovely and glorious a Sight, whose Continuance shall make our Happiness in Heaven, would let in Joys, and create Desires, too mighty for frail Mortality to sustain. For History tells us, Longing or Joy, have sometimes reach'd Degrees, that have made them fatal; and why then should their Union in such Extreams be thought incapable of producing the like Effect? Nor is it perchance more a Privilege of the next Life, that we shall then see God, than that we shall survive that glorious Sight, which is too dazzling an Object for mortal Eyes, till our mortal Part hath put on Immortality. Again, the Omnipresence of God is such a penetrating Attribute, that nothing can be hid from his Eyes: Wherefore the Posterity of *Adam* after this Distance, and after so perpetuated an Impairment, cannot but condemn the Poverty of his Conception, that thought to secure himself from his Creator in the Shade of the Garden, who had beheld him before in the Darkness of his *Chaos*, and in the Obscurity of Nothing; that thought to fly from God, which could not fly himself, or imagined that one Tree should conceal his Nakedness from God's Eye, as another had reveal'd it unto his own: From hence we may conclude, that at the last Day, when our Offences shall be drawn into Accomp't, the Subtily of our Inquisitor shall not Present unto God a Bundle of Calumnies, as confutable Accusations, but will discreetly offer up (as we may see by *Satan's* true, wise and

and reverent Answer to the Question, *Whence comest thou, as well understanding the Omniscience of his Maker's Nature, was not so ready to deceive himself, as to falsify unto him, whose Cognition is no way deludable) unto his Omnipresence, a sure and undeniable List of our Transgressions.* As for the Wisdom of God, it may literally be said thereof, what Men will have figuratively spoken of the Works of Christ, that if the Wonders thereof were duly described, the whole World, that is all within the last Circumference, would not contain them; for as his Wisdom is Infinite, so cannot the due Expressions thereof be Finite; and if the World does not comprise him, it cannot comprehend his Story. To run through all the Divine Attributes would puzzle Admiration itself, and transport it into Wonders beyond Excess, wherefore I will employ my Thoughts on the excessive Love I owe to God for my Creation and Preservation, and which Commandment I can entirely obey without any Violation, though I allow my Affections other Objects; provided they be kept in due Subordination to, and held from entering into Competition with that Love, which ought to be appropriated wholly to him.

The Trinity is a Mystery I durst not meddle with; as for Apprehensions, or secondary Relations, have not only promoted popular Errors in *Philosophy*, as well as vulgar and senseless Heresies in *Divinity*, I shall leave the Determination of this high Point to the first Person of this mysterious Conjunction of Three into One; for he alone is it that can truly determine these and all Things else, who as he hath proposed the World unto our Disputation, so hath he reserved many Things unto his own Resolution, whose Determinations we cannot hope from Flesh, but must with Reverence suspend unto that great Day, whose Justice shall either condemn our Curiosities, or resolve our Disquisitions. I abandon the Vanity which affects some Men, in striving to know what is above the Reach of Mortality to understand; for though the Attempts of some have been precipitous, and their Scrutinies so audacious as to come within Command of the flaming Swords, and lost themselves in Attempts above Humanity, yet have the Enquiries of most defected by the way, and tired within the sober Circumference of Knowledge.

Though

Though it is said, God only hath Immortality, yet are Angels also deathless; and though of a Nature differing from ours, and thereby plac'd above the personal Experience of our Sufferings and Infirmities, which we bear, since the Curse of Mortality intail'd on Mankind; yet do they so sympathize with us, as to rejoice at the Repentance of a Sinner. These ethereal Substances, which (if the *Romish* Divines are good Marshals of the heavenly Host) compose the celestial Hierarchy, are of several Orders, as (besides 6 more) *Archangels*, *Cherubims* and *Seraphims*, which last Name springs from the Root *Seraph*, which signifies to burn or flame: And from hence those pernicious Creatures, that our *English* Translators call *fiery Serpents*, are stil'd in the *Hebrew* Tongue, *Hannechafim Haf-seraphim*. Of this last Dignity was (I really suppose) *Lucifer*; who, with the apostate Spirits, deserted his first Station; not as frighted thence by any Blemish he descriy'd in God, but probably fell by an imperious Affectation of a Parity, and a sacrilegious aspiring to Perfection; which he was criminally unable to behold, without wishing them his own.

Now, I do not believe a Reparation of the Loss of so many Spiritual Inhabitants, nor God's Indigence in any Thing else, forced him to create the World, thereby to make new Acquisitions, since he was unconceivably Happy (in his own Sufficiency) before the Creation had a Being: But his Goodness press'd him to manifest and impart his Glory, and the Goods which he so over-flowingly abounds with. Witness his Suspension of the World's Creation, which certainly had an earlier Date, was the Deity capable of Want, and the Creatures supplying it. It is almost an universal Creed to affirm the World by the Virtue of a powerful *Fiat*, was a Production out of Nothing; but from the Relation which *Moses* gives of this stupendious Work, saying, *The Earth was without Form and Void, and Darkness was upon the Face of the Deep, and the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the Face of the Waters*; it seems there was a Formation not only of Matter, but of Form, and a Materation even of Matter it self. Its Existence from a casual Concourse of Atoms, is an Opinion as absurd as the *Stagirites Prima Materia*, which was only the Veil of Nature drawn betwixt him and that Hand, whose Power was pleas'd to hang this great and ponderous Fabrick, without

without any Support, in the Air. ^{be} Alexander's Pedagogue may think this Frame was from Eternity, I do not; but as there is Obscurity in its Beginning, as well as End, insomuch that its Nativity is as indeterminable as its Period is inscrutable, my Curiosity shall not incite me to erect positive Assertions upon uncertain Opinions: However, it is my Utinam that I had seen the first Dawn of Light approach out of the dark Chaos, whereby I might have seen the wonderful Shew of Five Days after.

As for the Duration of this sublunary Orb, and those elemental Bodies we see above, the very Angels cannot tell how long it shall endure, wherefore the Rabbis Prophecy is in no Request with me, who predicted its Catastrophe at the End of Six thousand Years. An End of the World there will be for certain, and its Dissolution will be by a general Conflagration; but when it will receive its *Exit*, is a professed and authentick Obscurity, unknown to all but to the Omnipotency of the Almighty. Certainly the End of all Things are wrap'd up in the Hands of God, he that undertakes the Knowledge thereof forgets his own Beginning, and disclaims his Principles of Earth; no Man knows the End of the World, nor assuredly of any Thing in it: God sees it, because unto his Eternity it is present, he knows the Ends of us, but not of himself; and because he knows not this, he knows all Things, and his Knowledge is endless, even in the Object of himself.

But whilst the World endures, admirable is God's Providence in the Gubernation thereof; for his infinite Wisdom does not only take care of the Species or common Natures, but keeps close the Guard of Individuals, and single Essences therein. His watchful Eye looks below the Moon, and claims the Prerogative of guiding all sublunary Affairs, without depositing them into the Power of inferior Deputations. Most surprizing are all those strange Occurrences, and as strange Events come to pass in the World, to give Birth to such miraculous Revolutions, which have too often tempted even good Men to question God's Conduct in the Government of this Terrestrial Fabrick; whilst the Calamities and Persecutions of Virtue and Innocence, seem'd approv'd by him, who accumulates Prosperities on their criminal Opposers. But these seeming Irregularities which the Heathens thought fit to impute to the giddy Whimsies of Fate, Destiny, Chance, or Necessity, are not only consistent

sistent with God's Justice and Goodness, but are Productions of it. If God's whole Design in the Administration of the World should be disclosed, all those Revolutions and Occurrences of Empires, Kingdoms, States, Families, and particular Persons, which Men are here so prone to quarrel with, would appear so just, so requisite, and so seasonable, that those very Things which tempted some to deny God, would engage me to praise him. God's providential Operations are Dispensations distributed among Men, not only out of Necessity and Justice, but even out of Mercy of those very Afflictions, that were most imputed to his Severity, to convince them that their Hopes were never disappointed, but to secure their Title to better Things than those they hoped for ; nor their inferior Interests (at the long-run) prejudiced, but for the Advantage of their supreme Ones. Thus, as the Effects of God's Providence are unfathomable, I shall not attempt to fancy my self one Jot the nearer Heaven ; for being mounted on the Wings of Prosperity, lest when the contrary Wind of Adversity dismounts me, and my unexpected Fall awakes me from my pleasant Dream, I should find my self to be really as low, as I was before, but seemingly high. Truly I have so slight an Esteem of Fortune, that I cannot vouchsafe her the Honour of a Being ; but leave that to those poor *Heathens* who were indeed as blind as they suppos'd her to be. Whatsoever Blessings I here enjoy I receive them, as indeed they are, as the Bounties of an indulgent Father, with Thanks and Love, and I use them to that End, for which I suppose so good and prudent a Father would bestow them on a beloved Son ; so that I may make them as much Instruments of my own Good, as they are Testimonies of my Father's Affection.

The Enjoyments of a happy Life should not make my Inclination exorbitant in craving more than was requisite for the Station wherein it had pleas'd God to place me. It was *Adam's* growing wanton in *Eden*, where the Earth freely brought forth all Things of it self ; and where his Task of labouring was but his Recreation, not his Toyl, which sent him first abroad to sweat in the World, and to wage a constant War with Briars and Thistles. How happy was the first Man's Portion, whose original Settlement was in a State of Innocence, cloathed with Immortality ? But ea-

ger to pluck the Blossoms of his Wife's Virginity, without Permission, he forfeited his Happiness; and consciotis of his capital Error, he thought by a private Retirement to obscure himself from God: But what Creature can fly from the Omnipotence and essential Ubiquity of his Maker? For, as he created all Things, so is he beyond and in them all; not only in Power, as under his Subjection, or in his Presence, as being in his Cognition, but in his very Essence, as being the Soul of their Causalities, and the essential Cause of their Existences. Before this fatal Lapse of our first Parents, which intail'd the Curse of Mortality on their Progeny, Death could not destroy *Adam* nor *Eve*, for that had overthrown the Intention of the World, and put the Creator to act the sixth Day over again. But when God called them to an Accomplice for their Transgression, the Coats of Skins which he made them was a lively Emblem they had newly learn'd to die; for unto them a Garment from the Dead was but a Dictate of Death, and the mournful Habit of Mortality. When *Cain* was born, they saw the dismal Consequences of being disrobed of their Immortality, for with him enter'd not only the Act, but the first Power of Murder: But although he purposed to do his Brother a Mischief, yet I question whether he intended to kill *Abel*, or design'd that, whereof he had not beheld an Example in his own Kind; for it seems to appear there might be somewhat in that Disaster which he would not have done, or desir'd undone, when he broke forth as desperately, as before he had unmannerly, *My Iniquity is greater than can be forgiven me.* Our first Parents had Free-will to act either Good or Bad, wherefore it was in vain for *Eve* to accuse the Devil's Temptation, or *Adam* his Wife's Seduction, after their unhappy Fall: Alas! their Crime was inexcusable, who had Power to do as they pleas'd; and seeing that many in their Imperfections have resisted more powerful Temptations, and in many Moralities condemn'd the Facility of their Seductions, their Error hath depriv'd our corporeal Part of being Partner with the Soul in Immortality upon Earth; which Privilege hath been so affected by some, that they have vainly counterfeited an Immortality, and stole their Death in hope to be esteem'd what they were not: Which can be look'd upon but as an ambitious Vanity, when the daily Dictates of Corruption loudly tell us we are the Sons of the Earth.

Satan;

Satan, in the shape of a Serpent, having robb'd *Adam* of his Felicity, by beginning his Deceit in the weaker Vessel, which had Strength sufficient to consummate the Fraud in the stronger, the impetuous Torrent of his Malice against Man ceasing not here, he endeavour'd afterwards to make the World believe, that he was God himself; but failing of his first Attempt to be but like the highest in Heaven, he hath obtained with Men to be the same on Earth, and hath accordingly assumed the Annexes of Divinity, and the Prerogatives of the Creator, drawing into Practise the Operation of Miracles, and the Pre-science of Things to come. Thus hath he in a specious way wrought Cures upon the Sick, play'd over the wondrous Acts of Prophets, and counterfeited many Miracles of *Christ* and his Apostles. Thus hath he openly contended with God; and to this Effect his Insolency was not ashamed to play a solemn Prize with *Moses*, wherein altho' his Performance was very specious, and beyond the common Apprehension of any Power below a Deity, yet was it not such as could make good his Omnipotency; for he was wholly confounded in the Conversion of Dust into Lice; an act Philosophy can scarce deny to be above the Power of Nature, nor upon a requisite Predisposition beyond the Efficacy of the Sun. Wherein notwithstanding, the Head of the old *Serpent* was confessedly too weak for *Moses*'s Hand, and the Arm of the Magicians too short for the Finger of GOD. In Paradise the Devil assum'd the Serpent's shape; but since he is suppos'd to appear in the shape of a *Goat*, as is somewhat confirm'd in the Text, *Thou shalt not offer unto Devils*; where the Original Word is *Seghnirim*, that is, rough and hairy *Goats*. A *Goat* is made the Hieroglyphic of the Devil; so might it be the Emblem of Sin, as it was in the Sin-Offering: And so likewise of wicked and sinful Men, according to the Expression of Scripture in the Method of the last Distribution, when our Saviour shall separate the *Sheep* from the *Goats*, that is, the Sons of the Lamb from the Children of the Devil.

Tho' it may in some manner be allowable to represent the Devil from Scriptural Descriptions, yet methinks it is a great piece of Folly among *Christians* in attempting to delineate their Creator, or God the Father, in the shape of an old Man: Truly, the Attempt is rash, not only in the description of Invisibility, but Circumscription of Ubiquity, and fetching under Lines incomprehensible Circularity. The Design perhaps may be derivative from the hieroglyphical Description of the *Egyptians*,

who to express their *Eneph*, or Creator of the World, described an old Man in a blue Mantle, with an Egg in his Mouth, which was an Emblem of the World. Truly the *Hieroglyphicks* of the *Egyptians* were more tolerable, and in their sacred Letters more veniably expressed the Apprehension of Divinity; for tho' they imply'd the same by an Eye upon a Sceptre, by an Eagle's Head, a Crocodile, and the like; yet did these manual Descriptions pretend no corporal Representations; nor could the People misconceive the same unto real Correspondencies. So, tho' the *Cherub* carried some Apprehension of Divinity, yet was it not conceiv'd to be the Shape thereof; and so perhaps because it is metaphorically predicated of God, that he is a consuming Fire, nevertheless he may be harmlesly described by a flaming Representment. But to conceive these Descriptions to be really shaped like our Maker, is as absurd as to aver that Storks are to be found, and only live in Republicks, or free States; which is a pretty Conceit to advance the Opinion of popular Policies, and from Antipathies in Nature to disparage Monarchical Government.

But above all the Inventions which the Devil found out to advance his pretended Deity, was the solemn Practise of Oracles, wherein in several Parts of the World he publickly profess'd his Divinity; but how short they flew of that Spirit, whose Omnipotence they would resemble, their Weakness (as several historical Narrations prove) sufficiently declares; but at the coming of *Christ* there commenced a Cessation of them, which was an evident and convincing Acknowledgment of that Power which shut up his diabolical Lips. However, as his Malice is vigilant, and the Sins of Men do still continue a Toleration of his Mischiefs, he resteth not yet, nor will he ever cease to circumvent the Sons of the first deceived; wherefore he runs into Corners, exercising minor Trumperies, and acting his Deceits in Witches, Magicians, Astrologers, and such inferiour Seductions; till all which are exploded as ridiculous and injurious to Truth, in vain do we cry that Oracles are down; *Apollo's* Altar yet doth smock; nor is the Fire of *Delphos* out unto this Day.

However, our Saviour bidding the unbelieving Disciple put his Fingers into the Impressions of his Sacred *Stigma's*, to satisfy his Incredulity that he was real Flesh and Blood, and not Spirit, the Experiment makes me no Infidel in the Apparition of Ghosts; but nevertheless, it is a great Error in Christians, who holding the Dead to rest in the Lord, do yet believe they

are

are at the Lure of the Devil ; that he who is in Bonds himself commands the Fetters of the Dead, and dwelling in the bottomles Pit, can call the Blessed from *Abraham's* Bosom. *Sa-muel's* Apparition to *Saul* was only a Delusion, which a Concitation of Humours produces in a conceited, or rather deceived Fancy, in making it believe it sees a Body that is not real : Or in case it was really the departed Person, his appearing was then by Divine Permission, that the King might be convinced of his Wickedness and Desertion from God, by the same Prophet. The Devil has no power to disturb the blessed Dead, nor raise them to Life again, but the Force of Divine Power can do it ; as witness *Lazarus*, to whom, even during his Sicknes, *Christ* vouchsafed (a Title to which all *Cæsar's* were but Trifles) the Style of Friend, yet was permitted not only to lie a dying, but to die, his Rescue being deferr'd till it was thought impossible ; as it was so indeed to any less Power than Omnipotence. As for those little Sprights call'd *Fairies*, I cannot tell what to make of them ; if there be any such diminutive Substances Ethe-rial, my Reason induces me to believe them to be no other than those departed Souls, whose Incredulity not hearkening to our Saviour, when he descended into the Bowels of the Earth, to preach to the Spirits there in Prison, they were doom'd to re-side in their Terrestrial Mansions, till a plenary Judgment pun-ishes their Unbelief. The canonical Story of the Witch of *Endor* forces me to a Belief of such mischievous Existences ; but that they can transform, or make a *Metamorphosis* of them-selves into Beasts, my Faith therein is apocryphal, because the Body of a Beast is not capable of a Human Soul ; nor can the Soul of Man animate a Beast's Body, there being no Relation between the Matter and Form ; nor is there any Disposition, Appetite, or Aptitude in that Matter to receive such a Form : Therefore when they are said to be seen in the shape of Cats, Dogs, or other Creatures, it is only a Delusion of Satan, who can delude us by suddenly removing one Object from the Eye, and substituting instead thereof another, by working on the outward sensitive Organ, either by altering the Situation there-of, or by disturbing the visive Faculties, or else by casting a Mist before the Sight. Nevertheless, I must grant a Conces-sion to his Power (through God's Permission) of raising by the help of natural Causes great Tempests, and Hurricanes, and discharging from the Magazines of Heaven the astonishing Meteors of Thunder and Lightning ; but yet not in such super-natural Peals which affrighted the amazed *Israelites*, when they fetch'd down their Law from the Holy Mount,

Unsufferable in a *Christian Country* are *Astrologers*, who pretending to be of the secret *Divan* with the *Stars*, have not been also wanting in their *Deceptions*; and having won the Belief of the *Vulgar* unto *Principles* whereof they make great doubt themselves, have made them believe that arbitrary *Events* below have necessary *Causes* above; whereupon their *Credulities* assent unto any *Prognostications*, and daily swallow the *Predictions* of *Men*, which, besides the *Independency* of their *Causes*, and *Contingency* in their *Events*, are only in the *Prescience* of *God*. It is beyond the *Art* of *Astrology* exactly to calculate the *Nativities* of *Men*, in running through the *Labyrinth* of the various *Vicissitudes* and *Mutations* that may attend them from the *Womb* to the *Grave*; or to tell the *Destruction* of *Empires*, cast up the *Lives* of *Kingdoms*, or foretell the *Subversion* of *States*; neither can its *Students* truly foresee the *Variety* of the *Weather* in each *Season*, though they pretend to it as perfectly as if they had the *Book of Fate*, and *Ephemerides* of *God* in their own *Hands*.

No sooner had the Devil subdu'd the *Innocency* of our first *Parents*, but the unhappy *Conquest* was the *Introduction* of *Sin*, which is the *Father* of *Death*, the *Fatalities* of whose sharp *Sting* the *World* hath but too sensibly felt since the first *Sacrifice* offer'd to his *Crimson Throne*. Their *Lapse* too soon translated the *immortal State* of their *Progeny*, like to be, into the *dismal Maze* of *Mortality*; and though the *Patriarchs* generally reach'd so many *Years*, which seem'd to out-live all the *Terms* of *Consanguinity*, and so became *Strangers* to their own *Posterity*, yet none ever arriv'd to the *Age* of a thousand *Years*, which to *God* are no more than one *Moment*, for all *Parts* of *Time* are alike to him, unto whom none are referable; and all *Things* present, unto whom nothing is past, or to come. But now how are our *Days* shorten'd, since the *Zone* of *Time* (which, like *Fire*, destroys whatever it preys on) measures our *Lives* with a great deal lesser *Circumference*? If we reach *Seventy*, it is counted a great *Age*; and if we survive longer, our *Days* are full of *Sorrow* and *Woe*. That all *Men* must die, sooner or later, is a general *Rule* without *Exception*, excepting the *Persons* of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, who having ceas'd to converse with *Mortals*, dy'd not; but the first having liv'd as many *Years* as the *Year* contains *Days*, God vouchsafed him and the other an unexampled *Exemption* from *Death*, by shewing them a new and nearer *Cut* to *Heaven*, without paying the common *Debt* of *Nature*. Since *Man* is born to die, I

can now behold the Death of very near Friends without venting the Passion of excessive Grief. Now the Child is dead, wherefore (said the royal Prophet) should I weep? Alas! when our Change comes, which makes us cease from being Men, we begin then to be as Angels. *Cato* would die because the Commonwealth declin'd; *Nerva*, because the Laws were not kept; *Silvianus*, because he would not live at the Mercy of his Enemy; *Lucretia*, to cover a Dishonour; why then should I be dar'd by those Heathens, when I know a much surer and better Way to immortal Life? In this *Bochim*, or Valley of Tears, we are all *Benonies*; the Sons of Sorrow. The Way to Heaven is by weeping-crofs; nay, the very Calendar tells us, we come not to *Ascension-Day* till *Paffon-Week* is past. As God hath been pleased to derive me from good and religious Parents, from whom I receiv'd the Advantages of a liberal Education, I am sensible the only way to be happy, is by living a good Life, in order to make a good Preparative for Death; which (as one truly told *Adrian*) is an eternal Sleep, the rich Man's Fear, the poor Man's Wish, an inevitable Event, the Flight of Life, and Dissolution of all. I know not whether it be the Horror or the Pain that doth in Death affright us; or whether it is the Doubt and Fear of what shall become of us hereafter, makes most Men afraid to die, I will not presume to determine; but let it be which it will, I'll positively affirm, it argues great Cowardice to fear that, without which we cannot be accounted happy. How bravely did the Philosopher appear, when he told the *Athenians*, they could do nothing but what Nature had ordain'd before them? How undauntedly did he take his Poyson, as if he had been drinking Glory to the Deity? If we would not have the King of Terrors seem terrible to us, we should daily expect his Arrest; therefore I endeavour to improve the Time I have to stay here to the best Advantage; for this Companion of Death keeps his constant Pace, and flies as fast in Idleness, as in Employment. Whether we play or labour, sing or dance, sleep or study, the Sun posts, and the Sand runs. There is an appointed Time for all Men to die, beyond the Verge of which it is impossible to exceed a Moment; the irreversible Decrees of Fate will not permit Life to remain the twinkling of an Eye longer; nevertheless, some Men do not live out half their limited Time, as shortning their Days by excessive Inebriations, venereous Acts with variety of Women, breaking such Laws which obliges Justice to unsheathe her Sword without any dispensing Mercy,

Mercy, and taking several other irregular Courses, offensive both to God and Man. Death is welcome to me, come when it please; therefore, if I observe purging or bleeding, Spring and Fall, or decline all Medication or Use of Physick when *Mezzaroth* rages in our Climate, it is not so much to prolong Life, as to prevent those Fatalities proceeding from Diseases which may make one linger out a Life in great Misery and Pain. So little do I desire Longitude in the Vanities of this World, that should I get beyond the Climacterical Year, so much fatal to many great and learned Men, yet should I not, with the *Roman* Emperor, esteem it, with great Joy, a Favour of Fate to pass it over. I never hear a Bell toll but it puts me in mind of Mortality, and diverts my Thoughts with an utter Detestation of the fugitable Toys of Life. Was I old, it would put me more eagerly in Remembrance, that when the Marks of Age appear, the Journey unto Death cannot be long; but as it is, I am willing to sing *Nunc dimittis*, and to be launching into the Gulph of Eternity, because dying well, is not only a ceasing from ones Labour, but an entrance into a future State, where there is undisturbed Rest for evermore.

When a Man is gone out of the Land of the Living, and is here no more seen, he shall not lie for ever in the Grave. I am sure, that after Worms and Corruption have destroy'd this Body, I shall arise again, and see God in the Flesh. When the great Assizes, the general *Venite* is proclaim'd, all the Sons of *Adam* will arise from the Grave to eternal Life: So shrink not, incredulous Nature, at the Possibility of a Resurrection, when the God of Nature himself undertakes it. As for Women, the first of whom emerg'd her Posterity in the Waters of Calamities (and therefore the *Astrologers* have done well in placing the House of them next to that of Death) I will not with a certain *Schoolman* dispute whether they shall rise at the last Day in the same Sex; the Query, how paradoxical soever it may seem, yet will it prove an undeniable Truth, that they shall have a Resurrection from the Dead as well as Men. All the dead in *Christ* (who are first to rise) shall live again; and at the Resurrection shall be those distinguishing Rewards given to Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and other Sufferers for God's Cause, which our blessed Lord has promis'd, and which in this Life they could not receive. This was the royal *Psalmist's* Comfort, he hoped to see the Goodness of the Lord, in the Land of the Living, upon the Earth of the Living, of those who shall die no more. For this present Earth is the Earth

Earth of the dying ; but those who attain to that Resurrection shall not, cannot die any more. When the Divesture of Mortality dispenses Man from all those laborious Duties, which were here requisite to be perform'd, their glorify'd Bodies being united again to their Souls, shall then employ (I'll say, not their Time, but) their Eternity it self, in conversing with God, and following the Lamb whithersoever he goes. The Doctrine of the Resurrection is grounded upon an infallible Truth, which is of such a diffused Nature, and whose Empire is so large, that it hath Place within the Walls of Hell, and the Devils themselves are daily forced to practise it ; not only as being true themselves in a metaphysical Verity, that is, as having their Essence conformable to that of their Maker, but making use of moral and logical Verities, that is, whether in the Conformity of Words unto Things, or Things unto their own Conceptions, they practise Truth in common among themselves. For altho' without Speech they intuitively conceive each other, yet do their Apprehensions proceed through Realities, and they conceive each other by Species, which carry the true and proper Notions of Things conceiv'd. And so also in moral Verities, altho' they deceive us, they lie not unto each other ; as well understanding that all Community is continued by Truth, and that of Hell cannot consist without it.

They think unlearnedly, who imagine the Mortality of the Soul, which cannot die ; and it sounds as ill to the Ear of Reason, for any to go about to define what it is. The Nature and Quality of this immortal *Ens* defies an absolute Determination of its Substance ; wherefore (as I told the right reverend Doctor *Moulton* Bishop of *Kildare*, in an Argument on this Subject) *Let the indubitable Knowledge of the last Day resolve the Matter.* The Opinions of the Learned are various concerning it, and some of them as absurd as the *Metempsychosis*, or Transmigration of that immortal Being from one Body to another ; therefore I adhere as little to their Suppositions, full as much as I detest their Impiety, who would advance the Opinion of total Death, and stagger the Immortality of that Part of us which ever was, and will be, a meer Stranger to the Force of Fate. The true Definition of it is as impossible to be given, as it is to separate the Accidents of Colour and Taste from the Species of Bread and Wine ; and as hard a Task is it to know the Infusion thereof into Man, whether by Traduction or otherwise : But being sure that I have a Soul, it shall be my peculiar Care how to save it. Not only hath a Man,

born with all the Formosity as Nature can allow human Kind, a Soul, but even Monstrosities, which the Practise of *Christians* hath acknowledg'd, who have baptiz'd geminous Births, and double Connascencies with several Names; as conceiving a Distinction in Souls, upon the divided Execution of their Functions; that is, while one wept, the other laugh'd; while one was silent, the other spoke; while one was awake, the other slept. As the Soul was originally breath'd into us by God, so does it return again to him that gave it. When we depart this Life, it undeniably takes its Flight to those peaceful Regions, where it hath an Assurance of entering into that endless Bliss, where God shall be the *summum bonum* to all Perpetuity. I must own, the Soul that separates from a Body throughly infected with the filthy Contagion of Sin, does not receive its plenary Punishment till the last Day; but till then the Conscience being tortur'd with thinking on the Plagues that will be hereafter inflicted, it wanders about in a most horrible Despair through the Principality of the Air, which is not only under the Command of *Satan*, but also the deep Receptacles in the Ocean, and subterraneous Places of this terrestrial Frame; as he told the Almighty, when he implor'd to afflict the Man of Uz. As the Love God bears us, dies not with us, nor doth (as Mens Affections) either endure a Funeral in our Tombs, or survive only in an useleſs Grief, or an Esteem as bootless, I will be so indulgent to my Soul, as to make what Defence I can against the Frailty of the Flesh, whereby it may not be excluded from the Conversation of Saints and Angels, and that infinitely more glorious Deity that made them what they are, without at all impoverishing himself: There will it enjoy its Maker, GOD, and see him as he is, who shall be all in all: comprising all the Goods we value in the Creatures, as eminently and fully, as the Sun doth the Light that twinkles in the Stars. There will the pious Soul revel in an Ocean of Felicity, which is so shoreleſs and bottomleſs, that all the Saints and Angels cannot exhaust it; it being as impossible for any Aggregate of Finites, to comprehend or exhaust one Infinite, as 'tis for the greatest Number of Mathematical Points to amount to, or constitute a Body.

How odious Sin appears in the Sight of Virtue is obvious enough, by the Aversion which God has not only now against it, but also in the very Infancy of the World, when it urg'd our Maker to repent that he had made Man; and to alleviate his Grief, destroy'd all Mankind, to eight Persons, with an uni-

universal Deluge. In this Inundation rational Creatures did not only perish, but all sensitive Creatures, excepting two of a sort, upon Earth: And in this general Destruction I believe the very Fish, only preserving two of each Kind to encrease and multiply again, suffer'd Emersion in their own Element, to make the Judgment more compleat. This is my Opinion, though the right reverend Doctor Compton, Bishop of London, told me he could not assent to it. But furthermore, how abominable is Sin to a God of Purity, when by the mysterious Means of a hypostatical Union he must restore our lost State? The great *Pbilanthropos* was most graciously pleas'd to condescend to permit the second Person in the Trinity to mix humane Nature with his divine Essence for our Redemption. The *Messiah*, to pacifie his Father's Wrath and Indignity, vouchsafed accordingly to descend upon Earth; for so inveterate a Hatred of Sin had widen'd the Distance betwixt God and Man, that it loudly declar'd the latter's Disability of finding out by his own Wisdom any Expedient of Re-union. The great *Theanthropos* was willing to be an Expiation for our Sins, and thereupon abhor'd not *Mary's Womb*, which confutes the Opinion of *Aristotle*, that holds the Feminine Sex hath not generative Emission, but only affords rather Place than Principles of Conception; which is an Aphorism that disparages the Fruit of the Virgin, and frustrates the fundamental Prophecy; nor can the Seed of the Woman then break the Head of the Serpent. But when our Saviour was come into this wretched World, and began to exercise his Ministerial Office, how was he requited for his exceeding Kindness? He was despicable in the Eyes of most, and hated by the generality of the unbelieving *Jews*; although of all the numerous Miracles recorded in the Evangelical Stories he scarce did any for his own private Relief. I read not (which is highly observable) in the whole Gospel, that ever he rejoyc'd but once, and that was, when his return'd Disciples inform'd him, that they had victoriously chas'd Devils and Diseases out of oppressed Mortals; and that by his Authority Men had been dispossess'd of both the Tempter and Punishment of Sin. He convers'd among his Contemporaries with Virtues, as well attesting what he was as Prophecies or Miracles could do; and to teach Man how much he valu'd him above those Creatures that Man makes his Idols, he often alter'd and suspended the Course of Nature, for Man's Instruction, or his Relief, and reyers'd the

Laws establish'd in the Universe, to engage Men to obey those of God, by doing Miracles so numerous and great, that the *Jews* Unbelief may be almost counted one. Yet were those Wonders wrought for a Generation that ascrib'd them to the Devil, and return'd them with so unexemplified an Ingratitude, that 'tis not the least of his Wonders, that he would vouchsafe to work any of them for such blasphemous Wretches, who were indeed, and may be truly styl'd *Chometz ben ya-yin*, Vinegar the Child of Wine, a most degenerate Off-spring of holy Progenitors. Alas! when *Christ* vouchsafed to live with Men upon Earth, to fit them by his Merits and Example to live with him in Heaven, he did so admirably mix an awful Majesty with an humble Meekness, and the assum'd Infirmitiess of his humane Nature with the seasonable Coruscations of his divine, and express'd in his whole Life so perfect and exemplary a Virtue, and yet so much sweeteness and gentleness towards those Aspirers to it that were the most short of it, that the *Jews* themselves could say, *He had done all Things well*. And his very Enemies that were employ'd to apprehend him as a Malefactor, confess'd even to those that sent them to do so, *That never Man spake like him*. His exemplary Life makes me believe him to be the Son of God; and I admire his Grief, when descending from the Mount of Olives, all the loud Acclamations of the glad Multitude that sang *Hosanna's* to him, and strew'd his Way with their Palms, their Vestments, and their Praises, could not divert him from deplored, even with Tears, the approaching Fate of *Jerusalem*; and expressing in the midst of his Triumphs a Concern for the very worst and stubbornest of his Enemies. But then again, with the greatest Admiration do I contemplate on the greatest Example of Lenity in our Saviour as could be shew'd, when he desir'd of God Forgiveness unto those, who having one Day brought him into the City in Triumph, did presently after act all Dishonour upon him, and nothing could be heard but *Crucifige* in their Courts. A Meditation on his Death makes me reflect on that *Jewish* Perfidiousness with Horror, which durst attempt to impeach the Son of Righteousness upon the Fallacy of *Petitio principii*, wherein a Question is only made a Medium, or else a Medium is assum'd as granted: For when they accused our Saviour unto *Pilate*, who demanding a reasonable Impeachment, or the Allegation of some Crime worthy of Condemnation; they only reply'd, *If he had not been worthy of Death, we would not have brought him be-*

before thee: Wherein there was neither Accusation of the Person, nor Satisfaction of the Judge, who well understood a bare Accusation was no Presumption of Guilt, and the Clamours of the People no Accusation at all. However, our blessed Saviour, altho' he was falsely accused, and had done such great Things to satisfie the unbelieving and contumacious *Jews* of his being their promis'd *Messiah*, would not decline Death to convince them; and tho' he had not seldom done so much to make himself the Object of their Faith, would not be invited from the Cross, tho' the chief Priests and Scribes themselves said at his Crucifixion, *Let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe him.* I shall not dispute whether or no God could, without violating his Justice, have devised any other Course for the Expiation of Sin, than the Passion and Death of *Christ*, at which terrible sight Nature shrank, the Earth suffer'd Convulsions, and the Sun shrouded himself with universal Darkness, as ashamed of the Deed; however, I may safely think, that he has chosen the most obliging and most endearing Way, displaying in this Divine manner of rescuing us, the severest Justice, and highest Mercy; the greatest Hatred of Sin, and the greatest Love to Sinners: Since by those unequal'd and unvaluable Sufferings, to which he deliver'd up for us that Son, who is so near unto him, that he truly said, *I and the Father are one.*

As at the Effusion of Christ's Blood, not only the hard Hearts of his Enemies relented, but the stony Rocks and Veil of the Temple was shatter'd, who would not eschew Sin, which could not be forgiven for any less Sacrifice than the Blood of the Son of God? Alas! our Offences may derogate from God's accessional Glory, but not from his essential Felicity; or rather the most desperate Sinners, by their greatest Crimes, can but change the Attribute they should bring Honour to, and but oppose the glorifying of his Goodness, to occasion the glorifying of his Justice, since he will be infallibly glorified, soon or late, either by Men's Actions or their Sufferings; by their Practice of Duties, or Punishment for Sin. I know the *Wages of Sin is Death*; and alas! what various Scenes of Misery hath Sin introduc'd to bring us to the Grave? To see the Galleys, what Captives are there chain'd to tug at the Oars, and tho' expos'd to all the miserable Hardships of a tempestuous Sea, have oftentimes Cause given them by their barbarous Usage ashore, to fear the Ocean less than any Part, save Death. Draw the Curtains of sick and dying Men, there may one behold them pine and languish

guish away by Distempers, that deprive them of all the Joys, Advantages, and (what is more considerable) Uses of Life, before they ease them of Life it self. Others breath rather than live, perpetually tormented either with their Diseases, or protract a wretched Life, upon Terms that turn it into a Trouble. And others struggling with the rude Pangs of Death, are yet perchance less tormented by them, than by the sad Prospect of their former Life, and the Remembrance of those criminal Pleasures, which yet it perhaps less troubles them that they must now forgoe, than that they once enjoy'd them. How dismal is it in Hospitals ! where one may see the various Shapes of human Misery, as many Souls narrowly lodged (if I may so speak) in synecdochical Bodies, mouldering away to Dust in their earthen Cottages ; for there miserable Persons by the loss of one Limb after another, survive but part of themselves, and live to see themselves dead and buried by piecemeal. And again, when I behold all the several Companies of Mourners, that almost make up Mankind, and view those copious Showers of Tears which almost every where water (not to say overflow) this Vale of Miseries, I am apt, to the great Delusion of Faith, to think almost that God's Privative (if I may so speak without attempting to entertain any heterodox Opinion) may contend with his positive Favours ; and that I owe little less for what I am not, than for what I am, to that discriminating Mercy of his, to which alone I owe my Exemption from Miseries ; as great as the Blessing it confers on me : For, *who* maketh thee to differ ? is a Question that may be as well ask'd in reference to our external, as to our spiritual Condition. However, a more serious Meditation on this Matter invites me to think I am yet more engag'd in God's Love, for protecting me from those gross Vices that disfigure most Men's Minds, than from those less dangerous, tho' more resented Diseases, that may (if God pleases) distemper my Body. For Ambition, Lust, Murder, Avarice, Envy, and other Crimes, which are enormous in the superlative degree, I reckon to be more formidable and pernicious Diseases and Calamities, than those that reduce Men to take Physick, or thrust them into Hospitals. To evince the Truth of which Paradox, I hope I have no need of judging of the Dangerousness of Diseases by the Nobleness of the Part afflicted, since I know that he that cannot err, seems daily to justifie my Assertion, by inflicting Sickness and the sharpest outward Calamities on his own dearest Children, to preserve them from the Contagion of Sin, or cure them of the unfilial Habitudes

tudes of it. Thus when I see a tender Mother apply a painful Blister to the Neck of her Favourite-Infant, threatened by some dangerous Malady, I scruple not to conclude, that she thinks the Trouble thereof an Evil inferiour to what it is like to undergo for want of that Remedy: So when I see our heavenly Father send Infirmities and Crosses to rescue those he loves from the Contagion or Dominion of Sin, I conclude, and safely too, he thinks Affliction a less Evil than Guilt, since he is too wise and indulgent a Physician to cure with a Remedy worse than the Disease. The Love which God bears us dies not with us, nor doth, as Mens Affections, either endure a Funeral in our Tombs, or survivie only in an useles Grief, or an Esteem as bootless. No, God's Love is so far from resembling the usual sort of Friends (who, when they have accompanied us to the Grave, do there leave us) that like the Angels that carried *Lazarus's Soul to Abraham's Bosom*, its Officiousness begins then most to appear, when our dark Eyes are clos'd, and is then truest to the beloved Soul when she forsakes the Body, giving each blessed Saint cause to say of God, what *Naomi* did of *Booz*, that *he hath not left off his Kindness to the Living, and to the Dead*. But of all the Sins for which God doth not only punish us in this World, by various Afflictions, in hopes of Amendment, but if obstinate also excludes Mankind from eternal Bliss, grant I may always keep my guard against *Presumption*, whereby too many persuade themselves, that God is so merciful that he will not damn a Man for sinning, which is an immoderate Fancy which destroys the Justice of God, when the Scripture plainly proves his Mercy will not forgive Offenders that continue in their Transgressions; nor his Benignity co-operate to their Conversion.

Neither is *Presumption* only a Sin against the *Paraclete* which will not be forgiven, but *Despair* also, which by a Decollation of all Hope annihilates the Mercy of God. Herein *Cain* overthrew that glorious Attribute of his Maker, as conceiving the Sin of his Murder unpardonable, which how great soever, is not above the Repentance of Man, but therefore whether he repented or no, it is my charitable Temper to suppose his bloody Crime was expiated in that Punishment he suffer'd temporally for it; for assuredly, if his *Despair* (which fatal Infirmity drives some Men beyond the Verge of any Redemption, by laying violent Hands on themselves) continued, there was Punishment enough in Life, and Justice sufficient in the Mercy of his Protection. Nay, the Life of the Desperate equals

equals the Anxieties of Death, who in incessant Inquietudes but act the Life of the Damn'd, and anticipate the Desolations of Hell. 'Tis indeed a Sin in Man, but a Punishment only in the Devils, who offend not God, but afflict themselves, in the appointed Despair of his Mercies. And as to be without all Hope is the Affliction of the Damn'd, so is it the Happiness of the Blessed, who, having their Expectations present, are not distracted with Futurities.

The Hope of God's Mercy gives great Solace and Content to my Soul, and incites me to perform good Works, whereby I may receive a Heavenly Reward hereafter: But my Expectation of Heaven I do not ground on any mercenary or illegal Sentiments; for indeed, to hope for Heaven as Wages for Work perform'd, or by way of Merit, which in the proper and strick acception of that Term is really a Presumption; wherefore it is my happy Frame of Mind to be able to love God purely for himself, without any Glance at all at my own Advantage. To hope my good Works (without which too I cannot obtain eternal Life) is as incongruous to Sense, as it is in vain to wish I might be established as the Angels are, from Danger of falling into Sin; wherefore I make a total resignation of my Hope to the Merits and Intercession of my blessed Saviour, as the only Way of retaliating my Soul with what it expects in the Life to come.

In my more juvenile Years, what with my own Inclinations to embrace Vice, and what with the Allurements of other young Gentlemen, who were generally pleas'd to think them innocent Diversions, I must acknowledge my self to have been the worst of Sinners; but had I been worse than I was, yet may I claim Absolution upon true Repentance; for the Tears of a broken and contrite Heart will waft an afflicted Soul into the Haven of true Consolation again. I know God is so good as to forgive a Penitent at the very Brink of the Grave: One of the Malefactors that died with *Christ*, found Mercy at the surrender of his last Gasp; however, I shall not make that unparalleld Example a Precedent for Death-Bed Repentance, because I am sure he loves the Oblations of Youthfulness better than the Sacrifices of the Dregs of old-Age. No Man need to doubt his Salvation, who sincerely relents his Desertion from under the Almighty's Banner, unless he is predestinated, as *Pharoah* and *Judas* of old, the first of whom could no more avoid his Fate of *Emerson* in the *Erythraean Sea*, than the other shun his Damnation by laying violent Hands on himself

self, after he had most impiously betray'd his Lord and Master, whereby he sinn'd beyond Aggravation, and committed one Villany which cannot be exasperated by all other; besides being charged with the Murder of his reputed Brother, Paricide of his Father, and Incest with his own Mother. Where Predestination is doom'd, there is no reversing the Decree; and tho' I now do hope the Mercies of God will consider our degenerated Integrities unto some minoration of our Offences, yet can I not think the Sincerity of our first Parents had so colourable Expectations, unto whom his Commandment was but single, and their Integrities best able to resist the Motions of its Transgression; wherefore the Heinousness of their Offence, incites me to call in question their Salvation, but with that Modesty, as not to dispute the eternal Punishment of our Maker. But if there is any Way of making my Election sure, it must be by courting Heaven at the rate of renouncing for it all those unmanly Sensualities, and trifling Vanities, for which inconsiderate Mortals are wont to forfeit the Interest their Saviour so dearly bought for them.

As Sin (tho' hidden in the most unfathomable Depth of Secrecy, stands so naked unto the Eye of the Almighty, that Man cannot deceive the Emblem of divine Justice, nor does there need any *Argos* to desery his manifold Errors) is so odious to our Maker, that he inflicted such a Curse on *Ham*, that his whole Posterity is of a sable Hue to this Day, I look upon it as a Symbol of that Deformity which lies in our Transgression; and thro' the dismal Horror which a black Tincture represents, the Poets have well described *Cerberus* and the Furies of Hell under this Complexion. Since our Sins are so offensive to God, the only way I should take to blot them out, would be a constant Practice of charitable Deeds, for Charity covers a multitude of Crimes. I fear there is no such Charity now shines just as it did in the short Meridian height of the *Christian Religion*; in that blessed space of Time when all the Believers were of one Heart, and one Soul, and *had all Things in common*; however, I do my Endeavour to imitate them as near as I can, and therefore account it much the safer Way, to trust my Charity rather than my Luxury with the Bag; the former will bring in an even Reckoning in Heaven; the latter perhaps a jolly one in the Tavern, but a very sad one in Hell. But where Intemperance bears the sway, it puts a Barrier against all charitable Inclinations; so, to avoid the Danger of Inhumanity, I choose rather to be well in the Morning, than drunk.

drunk over Night; and at any time had rather be free from the Sin, than please my Companions with the Frolick.

Of all the most stupendious Miracles recorded in holy Writ, my Curiosity would have been ambitious of seeing those solary ones, when the Sun at the Command of the *Israelitish* Hero stood still three Days in *Gibeon*; the other, when that glorious Planet ran back ten Degrees on the Dial of *Abaz*, for the strengthening *Hezekiah's* Faith, in God's Promise of his Cure; and that terrible Eclipse of the Sun, which happen'd at the crucifying of our Saviour on the Cross, and darken'd the whole Surface of the Universe, being supernatural, as falling out when the Moon was in *Opposition*, or at the *Full*; and therefore made the *Areopagite* cry out at *Athens*, where it was also visible, *Aut Deus naturæ patitur, aut machina Mundi dissolvitur*. These miraculous Narrations obtain my Belief of them without any great difficulty, because my Faith submits to the Pen of the *Holy Ghost*; besides, without Faith 'tis impossible for me to be saved; I do not mean by that sort of Faith that has more to do with the Understanding and Judgment than with the Will, and is a most strong Belief and Assurance, a supernatural Persuasion, that one may be enabled to do such or such a mighty Work; and which sort of Faith the Disciples of our Lord wanted, when they went about to cure the lunatick Child, and could not do it; but I mean an historical or orthodox Faith, which hath a Relation to Principles, and that is in order to Sanctification; and which consequently may be wrought up to a living Faith, a Faith working by Love, a Faith cleansing the Heart, a Faith overcoming the World, and quenching the fiery Darts of *Satan*.

Without this Faith (I say) it is impossible to attain Heaven, where we shall not only see our elder Brother *Christ*, but also all our Kindred, Friends, and Relations, that living here in his Fear, died in his Favour. For since in the Parable of the miserable Epicure, and the happy Beggar, the Father of the Faithful is represented as knowing not only the Person and present Condition, but the past Story of *Lazarus*; since the Instructor of the *Gentiles* confidently expects his converted and pious *Thessalonians* to be his Crown at that great Day, when the having turn'd many to Righteousnes shall, as the Scripture foretels, confer a Star-like and immortal Brightness; since (which is chiefly considerable) the Knowledge of particular Actions, and consequently Persons, seems requisite to the attainment of that great End of God, in the Day of Judgment, the Manifestation

on of his punitive and remunerative Justice ; since, I say, these Arguments, besides divers others, are afforded us by sacred Records, I may safely conclude, that we shall know each other in a Place, where, since nothing requisite to Happiness can be wanting, we may well suppose (at least, if we can imagine here what we shall think there) that we shall not want so great a Satisfaction, as that of being knowingly happy in our other selves, our Friends. Nor is what I have said only probable, but also it is not improbable, that those Friends that know us in Heaven, shall welcome us thither. For since Christ assures us, that the very Angels (tho' they be so far from being related to our Persons, that they are Foreigners to our very Nature) receive Accession of Joy for a relenting Sinner that by Repentance begins to turn towards God, I cannot think it absurd, that in a Place where Charity shall not only continue, but grow perfect, our dear Friends should rejoice to see us, not only begin to turn towards God, but come home to him. Nor do I think it unlikely, that our transported Souls shall mutually congratulate each other, they having now fully escap'd the numerous Rocks, and Shelves, and Quicksands, and threatening Storms, and no less dangerous Calms, thro' which they are at length arriv'd at that peaceful Haven, where Innocence and Delight (which are here so seldom match'd) are inseparable Companions, both of each other and each blessed Resident. With those Friends we here lamented, we shall there rejoice. And 'twill be but needful, that the Discovery of each others Virtues should bring us to a mutual Knowledge of our Persons ; for otherwise, we shall be so chang'd, that we should never know our Friends ; and should scarce know ourselves, was not an eminent Encrease of Knowledge a part of that happy Change : For those departed Friends whom, at our last Separation, we saw disfigur'd by all the ghastly Horrors of Death, we shall then see affliting about the majestick Throne of Christ, with their once *vile Bodies transfigur'd into the Likeness of his glorious Body*, mingling their glad Acclamations with the Hallelujahs of Thrones, Principalities, and Powers, and all the most dignify'd Favourites of the celestial Court. The seeing of our Friends in Heaven will assure us, that we shall for ever live with them there, the Re-union of Friends being there as privileg'd from Divorce, as that of Soul and Body, which scarce will be more strick and satisfactory : For, here indeed, if our Friends do not allay our Love or Affection by unwelcome Actions, or their contagious Sufferings, we commonly doat on them to a degree that, as it were, reduces God to deprive us

early of them, and snatch our Idols and his Rivals from us. But there our compleated Graces on both sides will not only deserve, but allow a higher strain of Friendship. The near Contemplation and Fruition of the infinitely transcendent Perfections of the Creator keeping all our Kindness to the Creatures, not only subordinate to the Love we owe to God, but grounded on it; as excited Needles, when they stick fastest to each other, owe their Union to their having both been touch'd by the Leadstone; to which they have therefore both of them stronger Inclinations than either to the other. There we shall satisfactorily understand those deep and obscure Mysteries of Religion, which the profoundest Clerks that love not to flatter themselves acknowledge they are unable fully to comprehend, nor never will, since here is no infallible Arbitrator of Christian Controversies upon Earth. And since what the Scriptures have reveal'd of *Paradise*, seems meant rather to quicken our Obedience than satisfie our Curiosity, I may for those Purposes have perhaps tolerably perform'd that Task (of heavenly Topography, or Description of the celestial Canaan) by the Acknowledgment of my Disability to do it worthily; but I will not presume to describe it better, till in Heaven; then might I taste Happiness enough too, to enable me to rectifie the true Definition of it.

Was it my Unhappiness to over-shoot the *Land of Promise*, I should curse Eve's Seduction for the wretched Fate; and as it is for putting Mankind to this extraordinary Trouble of obtaining Salvation, when it was in her Power to allow him Free-will to it when he pleas'd, I have some sort of Antipathy against her Female Posterity, but yet so much Compassion for them too, as not for the Fault of one particular Woman to include a general Revenge on the whole Sex. As I came of one, endued with all excellent Virtues, I had some Veneration for the fair Ones, but not to that degree as to die for Love, neither can I believe there be any such Fools; for tho' I find rife enough in Tragedians strange Stories of stabbing and poysoning for that foolish Passion, yet have I had the Curiosity to visit some of those warmer Regions, where the Flames of Love are thought to burn with more Violence than in these northern Climates, however (bating Duels and the Pox) I remember not to have observ'd Love to have ever been the Death of any Man, unless (speaking like Philosophers, who make Reason the constituent Form of Men) we will affirm, that Love by dethroning Reason, though it leaves the Lover alive, yet doth kill the Man. Moreover, I am loth to put so bad a Compliment upon Mankind, as to say that Love is wont to destroy their Lives, yet I think it will be no Calumny to say, it much disquiets them; For the Repulses, the Regrets, the Jealousies, the Fears, the Absences, the Despairs, and the rest of the afflicting Perturbations of Lovers, tho' in well-writ Plays they are soon read over with Diversion, yet they are not soon weather'd out, nor so easily supported

ported by the disconsolate Lover, whose Infelicities, tho' they may be perhaps so handsomly deplo'd as to delight the Reader, yet believe me, 'tis a much happier Condition to be free from Misfortunes, than to be able to complain eloquently of them ; for those Inconveniences fluttering about *Cupid's* Throne, I often attested against Wedlock, altho' the Person might be as handsom as I fancy'd her, as constant as I could wish her, and her Beauty and Friendship too concurring, might always have the Advantage of making all new Faces my Rivals ; but at the same time, though I would not contract my self, yet I never did with any Reluctancy dissuade others from it, as not daring to deny absolutely a Condition of Life, without which even *Paradise* and *Innocence* were not sufficient to compleat the Happiness of the first Man. I once approv'd a single Life best, as having no Curb to keep in the Reins of my Affections, which were often bestow'd upon Variety ; nevertheless, my Amours were not so flaming as to fall in Love with a Statue, nor with the *Egyptian* Pollinators to act Carnality with the dead, a Vitiosity as unnatural as *Sodomy*, that can embrace Corruption, and make a Mistress of the Grave ; that could not resist the dead Provocations of Beauty, whose quick Invitements scarce excuse Submission. Surely, if such Depravities there be yet alive, Deformity need not despair ; nor will the eldest Hopes be ever superannuated, since Death hath Spurs, and Carcasses have been courted. Also, that it is good to use venereal Pleasures sometimes, is a common Flattery of Sensuality, supporting it self physically upon the healthful Effects of the Act, if used moderately ; but indeed I must declare, that altho' sometimes Effects succeed which may relieve the Body, yet if they carry Mischief or Peril unto the Soul, we are therein restrainable by Divinity, which circumscribes Phyfick, and circumstantially determines the use thereof. From natural Considerations, Phyfick commends the use of Venery ; and happily Incest, Adultery, or Stupreration may prove as physically advantageous as conjugal Copulation ; which notwithstanding must not be drawn into Practice. And truly Effects, Consequents or Events which we commend, arise oftentimes from Ways which all condemn. Thus from the Fact of *Lot*, we derive the Generation of *Ruth*, and blessed Nativity of our *Saviour* ; which notwithstanding did not extenuate the incestuous Doings of the Generator. But reflecting seriously on the Folly of loving too many Women at once, I attempted to enter into a State of Matrimony, but not out of any Distaste I took at any *Bona Roba*'s Incivility ; for being always successful in the Devoirs I paid to *Venus*, I ty'd the nuptial Knot without making it the Refuge of a defeated Passion : But when about to change my Condition, I did not (as too many) marry only for Money, knowing that such are in danger of committing Adultery after Marriage, seeing they never marry'd the Woman, but her Portion : With me Virtue and Love, not Money and Parentage, made the Match, and the Question I

ask'd, was not, *What has she?* but, *What is she?* For making Prudence and Religion the Guides of Love, is the only Way of becoming both a good Husband, and a good Father.

Riches I do not gape after, nor would I pass by them if they fell in my Way, because it is said, *It is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than it is for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; which Assertion has extorted from Expositors various Interpretations, contrary to my Conjecture, which deems this Expression to be only an Allusion to a very strait Gate (not took notice of by *Josephus*) in *Jerusalem*, and thro' which *Camels* were wont to pass with great Difficulty; and thence it was called, the *Camel's Gate*. Was I as rich as *Crasus*, it would not puff me up with Pride, the *Truth*, or *Truth* of *Thales* would still be my Motto, and not as it was spoken by the Devil once, for if ever we meet with any wholsom Doctrine from Hell, or at any time the Devil speaks or practises Truth, it is upon Design, and a subtle Inversion of the Precept of God, to do Good that Evil may come of it; for maligning the Tranquility of Truth, I know he delights to trouble its Streams, and being a professed Enemy unto God (who is Truth it self) he will promote any Error as derogatory to his Nature, and revenges himself in every Desormity from Truth. But for my not taking the aforesaid scriptural Expression in a literal Sense, I would not be thought so imprudent as to endeavour to outwit an all-wise God, and to go about to put Fallacies upon him out of his own Word, by making even his most righteous Precepts the Topicks of my Disobedience.

Scorning to be link'd to a Combination of Vices, I desire my Soul might be so truly great and capacious, that nothing but an Heaven and Eternity might fill it; that very Word *Eternity* (whose Date hath neither Beginning nor End) very often extracts a Meditation from my most serious Thoughts, and obliges me to think, that Time, like Fire, having destroy'd whatever it could prey on, shall at last die it self, and go out into Eternity; whose Nature is such, that tho' our Joys, after some Centuries of Years, may seem to have grown older, by having been enjoy'd so many Ages, yet will they really still continue new, not only upon the score of their Welcomness and Freshness, but by their perpetually equal (because infinite) Distance from a Period.

My highest Ambition in this World is to be a Favourite in the Court of Heaven; hence have I much better Thoughts of Virtue, than to hope fine Cloaths may gain me a Respect where that could not: For I know that Goodness is enough of it self to advance the Rag above the Robe, and a leather Cap above a golden Diadem. It is most certain, that the Temper and Disposition of the Soul is no way better discernible, than thro' the Garb and Habit of the Body; for he that longs after new Fashions, will not be backwards in embracing new Religions; both proceeding from one and the same dangerous Principle, and Unconstancy of Mind, and a Desire

fire of Novelty. As for my Discourse, I do my utmost Endeavour, that every one that hears may by what they hear either gain a Virtue, or lose a Vice. Obloquy and Scurrility are too deform'd and wry-fac'd to gain any Place in my Affections. My Fingers are too clean to be foul'd by throwing Dirt in other Mens Faces. I am as much afraid to discover a Blemish in another Man's Eye, as I am to suffer a greater in my own; but would rather charitably condescend to lick out the Mote with my Tongue, than deridgily talk of it. I hold it too much below a Man to employ his Nails in vexing an old Sore, and scratching till he makes a new one; indeed I leave it to Dogs and Ravens to prey upon Carrion, and it is a very hungry Wit which is fain to feed upon such nauseous Diet. Other Men's Infirmities, whether natural or accidental, are much more the Objects of my Charity and Pity, than of my Merriment and Detision. I judge it a Cruelty proper to Weakness alone to murder the Sick, for no true Ingenuity can be so barbarous as to sport it self in the Misfortunes of the miserable. I esteem that a meer dwarfish Wit which cannot tell how to shew it self to the World, but by trampling (and so advancing it self) upon the Reputation of others. It is a barren Fancy, or at least has always a very hard Labour, which can be Mother to nothing but what Misfortune must be Midwife to. I cannot with the chief Peripatetick (as I said before) think the World to be eternal, for as soon as the Archangel shall shake the very Pillars and Foundation of the Earth with the awakening Sound of his shrill Trumpet, the Dead shall arise, and those that are living shall be chang'd in the twinkling of an Eye; then after Judgment is past on all Mankind, this terrestrial Fabrick and elemental Covering shall receive a final Dissolution. Now when the Time shall be, that the Earth shall yield up her Dead, or the Graves yield up their conceal'd Seeds, and in this great Autumn shall spring up and awake from their Chaos again, I will not presume to determine; however, I may conclude from a Prophecy of Joel, that we shall be judged on the Valley of *Zebisaphat*; and that altho' the Scripture says our Saviour's second Coming shall be in the Night, according to the comparison of a Thief, yet, if the Earth be almost every where inhabited, and his coming (as Divinity affirms) must needs be unto all, then must the Time of his Appearance be both in the Day and Night: For if unto *Jerusalem*, or what part of the World soever he shall appear in the Night, at the same time unto the *Antipodes* it must be Day; if Twilight unto them, broad Day unto the *Indians*; if Noon unto them, yet Night unto the *Americans*; and so with Variety according to various Habitations or different Positions of the Sphere: But altho' he appears in the Night, yet may the Day of Judgment, or Doomsday, well retain that Name; for that implies one Revolution of the Sun, which makes the *Nux&nb;sp;universi*, that is, the Day and Night, which makes one natural Day.

I need fear as little that I can be over-zealous in a good Matter

ter here upon Earth, as that I may be over-happy in Heaven; therefore as all Things are required to be done with Order and Decency, I approve of Organs in Churches, the Christian Practice of giving Rings in Nuptial Contracts, bowing towards the East, making the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, or other Rites and Ceremonies, and should as much stand up for the Defence of them, as for any fundamental Point of Faith. A most profound Veneration I pay to the Sacrament of the *Eucharist*; but not so much neither as to make the Bread and Wine (which are but the Signals, or visible Signs) the Things signified, and worship them for the real Body of *Christ*: For certainly, was the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* true, our Redeemer had had more Compassion for that Emperour whom the Monk poyson'd, than to have let him receiv'd his Bane in a Draught of his Salvation. However, some bigotted Zealots among the Papists (had they known the Danger) would scarcely have refus'd it, but rather have adventur'd their own Death, than refus'd the Memorial of his.

Formerly, in my more juvenile Years, I made more use of the Fencer than the Dancing-master, because my Desire was more to be a Man than a Puppit; and to be a Servant to my Country, rather than my Mistress. Again, whatsoever my Talent is, I dig not in the Earth to hide it, but endeavour to traffick with it, till Art and Industry have brought an Encrease some way proportionable to the Stock of Nature; and hope too, to that degree which may intitle me to the *Euge* of my Lord, and the glorious Welcome of a *good and faithful Servant*. I am too much a Man to be without all Passion, but yet am not so much a Beast as to be govern'd by it: For it is the sole Propagator of Envy, which hath been so predominate in Mankind, that I am heartily sorry, and wish it was not true, what (to the dishonour of *Christianity*) is affirm'd of an *Italian*, who after he had inveigled his Enemy to disclaim his *Faith* for the Redemption of his Life, did presently stab him, to prevent Repentance and assure his eternal Death. This Villany of this *Christian* (if I may so call him) exceeded the Persecution of the *Heathens*, whose Malice was never so execrable as to kill the Souls of their Enemies, or extend unto the Exile of their *Elyziums*. 'Tis a great Depravity in our Natures, and surely an Affection that somewhat favours diabolical, to desire the Society, or comfort ourselves in the Fellowship of others that suffer with us; but to procure the Miseries of others in those Extremities, wherein we hold an Hope to have no Society ourselves, is methinks a strain above *Lucifer*, and a Project beyond the primary Seduction of Hell. I choose my Companions not by the outward Habit of their Body, but that internal of the Soul; and set a higher Value on them for their Merits, than their Births: Nor does Eldership in Brethren make me disesteem the younger, as being but Heirs to the lesser Patrimony, since I know the youngest have often had the Priority of Blessings, and been first in the Benediction of God.

It is (as the right Reverend Dr. *Mew* Bishop of *Winchester* once told me) a happy Thing to have a good Conscience; so striving what I can to keep it clear and blameless before God and Man, let the Storm and Tempest threaten never so loudly a splitting to other unbalanc'd Souls, I know not how to fear, whilst my Serenity of Mind is my Anchor, and Innocence my safe Harbour. My main Policy is to avoid an eternal, tho' by incurring a temporal, Misery; for Hell is as easily to be obtain'd by sitting still, as by running in pursuit of it. But what the *Hebrews* mean by *Sheol*, the *Greeks* by *Hades*, or the *Latinis* by *Infernum*, I will not be positive in the Matter; and tho' the Scripture makes mention of its being dark, and burning with sulphureous Flames, yet do I question its Locality at present, without (I hope) disparaging our Redeemer's Descent into the Bowels of the Earth, which we dare not say was dark if he was in it. The Damn'd (as I have upon several Demonstrations prov'd to the most Reverend Dr. *Tenison* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, without Contradiction) have at present but only a partial Punishment, and have their Residence in various Places, as in the Air, by that Title given the Devil by the Apostle, calling him the *Prince of the Air*; sometimes in the Concavities of the Earth, from this Answer of *Satan* to *GOD*, that he came from walking *to and fro in the Earth*; and it is not to be doubted, but that they sometimes raiack Plantations of the immense Ocean with great Hurricanes and violent Tempests. At the last Day, then the Damn'd receiving their plenary Punishment, they must expect at the grand Assize an Accomplishment of those Afflictions, which now they but gradually endure, for comparatively unto those Flames they are but yet *in Balneo*; then, then begins the terrible Fire in the massy and molt ponderous Ruins of this World, which shall burn for evermore. But if there was really any such Place as a Hell now, I could wish to be in it for some small matter of Time; however, not in a Bravado, to shew I durst desie Damnation, but that by the unexpressible Horrors thereof I may lead such a Life upon Earth as may preserve me from being an eternal Inhabitant there hereafter. I thank God, I am such in Prosperity, that I do not fear Adversity, and such in Adversity that I can scorn to wish for Prosperity; nay, such indeed in both, that it should never repent me that I have ever tasted of either. Was I to be in any publick Employment in the Commonwealth, I would endeavour to discharge my self with that Fidelity, which should be sure to gain me, tho' perhaps the Hatred of the Bad, yet the Applause and Love of the Good, and the unanimous Thanks of my Country. I do not trouble my self about the Distinctions of Government, which is best, whether *Monarchy*, *Aristocracy*, or *Democracy*, but since any Government is allowable by God as the People of any Nation thinks fit to choose, to be sure I shall be conformable to the Constitution of the Country where I am born, wishing the Foundations and Pillars of it may never be subject to the Alteration of Time, or any other Accident; for when once a Change is admitted, whereby the whole Model of Polity suffers a Conversion, the Government must be shaken'd into some other Form, either by the new Laws of a Conqueror, or by intestine and civil Broils, which God from this Kingdom for ever avert. Nevertheless, I am not so much bigotted to Kingly Government, as to think the Prince is above the Law; nor should the Doctrine of *Passive-Obedience* allure me to be submissive to *Non-Resistance*, without opposing that Tyrant who would command the Ruin and Destruction of me or my Family without a Cause. I cannot, with the *Turks*, think dying by the Hand or Command of the *Grand Seignior*, when the Blow is submitted to with entire Resignation, to be the highest Point of Martyrdom, and that the Honour immediately transports the Sufferer to *Paradise*. Indeed, I love my self better than the great *Vizier*, who, after he had been successful in all Matters of his Charge, and prov'd so excellent an Instrument of Victories and Services to his Master, that he was applauded by all to be a most happy and fortunate Minister, was so sensible of his own Condition, and the Favour of the Prince, that he confess'd he was now arriv'd to the greatest Glory and Perfection he could in this Life aspire to, and only wanted the holy Martyrdom, to die by the Order and Sentence of the *Sultan*, as the Reward of his Faithfulness, and the Consummation of all his Honours. When I consider the Slavery which the *French*

endure under a despotick, or arbitrary Power, I again please my self with the Thoughts of the Blessyness, the Happiness, and the Liberty of my own Country; where Subjects under the Protection and safe Influence of a most gracious and the best of Queens in the World, enjoy and eat the Fruit of their own Labour, and purchase to themselves with Security Fields and Mannors, and dare acknowledge and glory in their Wealth and Pomp, and yet leave the Inheritance to their Posterity. I confess, it is a Blessing and wonderful Happiness of a People, to be Subjects of a crown'd Head, who hath prescrib'd his or her Power within the compass of wholesome Laws, acknowledg'd a Right of Possession and Propriety of Estate as well in his Subjects as himself; who doth not punish the Innocent with the Guilty, nor oppres without Distinction, nor act the part of that Ruler whom God gives in his Wrath. I am as well satisfied with a Female Sovereign as a Male one; truly, I desire no *Salique-Law* here; and it is my hearty wish never to be under the Conduct of an Usurper, and such Rebels as once unjustly throwing off all Religion and Obedience to their lawful Prince, and (as if that Virtue had been the only Bar to all other Enormities and Sins) the Kingdom deprived of all Ecclesiastical and Civil Rights, and in all its Capacities and Relations deflowr'd and prophan'd by impious and unhallow'd Hands. While I am under the Protection of a just Governour, there is an Honour boiling in my Blood, which I could hold cheap enough, if bought with the high Price both of Life and Livelihood, tho' (if I might haye my Choice) I had rather preserve both to maintain it, than lose either to purchase it; I mean Loyalty to my Sovereign, Veneration for Prelacy, and Fidelity to my Country; for these I do not fear to embrace a Stake, to make a Scaffold my Bed, and a Block my Pillow, since I am assur'd, that whosoever thus lies down to rest at Night, shall without fail rise again to Glory in the Morning. I have heretofore been too often addicted, upon every little, insignificant, meer Punctilio of Honour, to seek satisfaction in a Duel; and as often have address'd a Mistress, who hath prov'd such a *Proserpine*, that either I or my Rival must be sent to Hell (if a desperate Wound without Mortality prevented not that great Danger) before either could enjoy her: But now, God be prais'd, I think any Honour (but that of vindicating one's Reputation unjustly pullied) too dear that must be bought with a Murder. Being come to that Maturity of Age and Discretion, as to be able to benefit my self by my Company, I make choice of such Companions as may serve me instead of Books, and of such Books as I intend shall often serve me for Companions. The Studies whereunto I cheerfully apply my self are such as will more make the Man, than please the Boy. As for Poetry and such-like pleasing Studies, I do not wholly neglect them, but use them as good Sauces to make others more substantial, and nourishing, relish the better. It is not my Design by reading, or seeing a Play acted, to talk high, breath Slashes, thunder out big Words, and store my self with so many Jests, and so much Bombast, as may tickle Asses, and stupifie Fools, but to edite by the Morality of them. True Historians, and sound Politicks, mathematical Exercises, and grave moral Discourses, are the fruitful Gardens where my Muses do ordinarily recreate themselves. *Philosophy*, whether natural or metaphysical, I delight in, as being the Handmaid to *Divinity*, which is a sacred Science that I would not have to lie out of my Way, becasne 'tis the right Road to Heaven. I would be cozen'd of nothing by my good Will, for fear of losing the Opportunity of bestowing much; and as I would not allow the Unfaithfulness of a Servant to prevent my Bounty, so neither would I desire my Negligence to occasioa the Servant's Dishonesty. I think it is only mocking God to say the *Lord's Prayer* when in wrath with any Person; and I can freely go on in the Ways of Godlineſs without a Spur, because it is a base and unbecoming Thing to be driven into Heaven by Force. I could freely go to *Paradise* with any Wind, and with any Name, where I am sure to meet with a Title of Honour, a Name written in the *Book of Life*, eyen the Honour of all his Saints. I cannot fancy that to be any Debalement to a generous Spirit, which carries it upon so high and noble Achievement; but think it an Happines to go into *Canaan*, tho' it be thro' a Red-Sea, and a rude Wildernes, whilst others feed so greedily upon *Quails*, that they never say Grace, but in a Murmuring, that they have not more, and better Cheer; I feed more upon my Hopes than my Enjoyments, and truly bless my G O D for both.